

AND ALL  
AROUND WAS  
DARKNESS



And All Around Was Darkness

For Kathy and Jim



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**Itchy Monkey Press**

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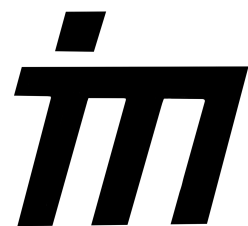
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## INTRODUCTION

### Mike Dines

The book you have before you is the third in the *Tales From the Punkside* series; a collection of books whose main concern is to provide a space for stories, anecdotes and various other shenanigans by those persons rarely heard – the fans and everyday participants in the punk movement. Books are often written by – or about – those who have some kind of ‘status’ in punk circles. I don’t mean that in a derogatory sense; after all, status is often thrust upon those concerned. Instead, I mean that there have been hundreds, nay thousands, of books written with ‘leading’ musicians, artists and activists in mind. Many would argue that those books reached saturation point a long time ago (and if you want to ask the opinion of say, Dick Lucas you merely email the guy or ask him at a gig). *And All Around Was Darkness* then, alongside *Tales From the Punkside* and *Some of Us Scream...* *Some of Us Shout* (and its sister volume *Not Just Bits of Paper*) continues to highlight the egalitarian nature of punk.

As with previous books in the series, *And All Around Was Darkness* presents a variety of narratives. Lucy Robinson’s academic-led chapter on Greenham Common sits alongside Francis’ Stewart’s ‘The Stranger in the Pit: Women, Animal Advocacy and Anarcho-Punk.’ Ted Curtis’ characteristic prose accompanies TS Paviour’s insightful poetry on religion, democracy and the daily grind. Woven in between we have the stories and recollections, from gluing the locks on the local school to the Mob touring in Finland. There is, thankfully, still a naivety to some of the writing. As editors, Greg and I have ensured that we have edited sparingly throughout, meaning that idiosyncrasies remain. This is, after all, not a ‘polished,’ internationally published ‘academic’ tome.

Greg and I hope you enjoy this current anthology. Special thanks as always to Russ Bestley for designing the book. Thanks to Sarah Dryden for the superb cover photograph. And thanks to the each and every contributor for giving their time in putting pen to paper. But most of all, thanks to you, the reader, for buying this book.

Mike Dines  
Portsmouth, 2017





So You Joined a Band to Change the World

## SO YOU JOINED A BAND TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Gregory Bull

But that isn't the start of the story well it's not the beginning of this story. This story begins when I returned to school in September 1982 after successfully completing a number of O-levels. When I returned to join the sixth form I found out, to my horror, that some of the boys that I was went to school with before O-levels hadn't in fact returned to school.

Over that long summer of 1982 I had done a lot of growing up.

What I hadn't been doing over the summer was maintaining contact with many of my school friends. To a certain extent I had grown out of some of them. Not their fault, I had moved on.

Nothing sinister. So where were they?

I began to look into the disappearance of some of my school friends, those who I actually wanted to spend some time with, and soon found out that they had gone to college to study their A-levels as there was a loophole in the benefit system of the time. This meant that anybody studying part-time, 16 hours per week or less, could actually sign on for some state benefits. I forget the name of this benefit at the time but it eventually became known as Income Support. This was a benefit for people who hadn't paid enough tax into the system to get unemployment benefit and who otherwise would receive no help from the state.

What this actually meant was that for a whole generation of young people it was possible to be paid to study your A-levels. So one day in the Autumn of 1982, Paul Smith and myself decided to up sticks and leave Northampton School for Boys and walked over to the Art College on St George's Avenue and enroll there in order to get hold of some of this money that was being given away by the state.

It doesn't really matter what I studied and that's not the point of this essay. The point being to try and explain and comment on the economics of being in an anarcho-punk band in the early to mid-1980s.

For some people, for example those who joined or formed bands that would become [relatively] commercially successful, this would change their lives. For me, it changed my life for a short period of time, but with much longer term implications for how I would live my life.

From recollection, the amount of money that I initially received was about £15-£16 per week. Of this money, I gave my parents £5 pounds per week towards my food and lodging, which seemed fair to me and them at the time. What this did leave me with was some money to do something with. I can recall my first ever giro [you got paid every two weeks with a sort of cheque that arrived two days after you "signed on" at the dole office/labour exchange that you had to cash in at a Post Office]. This meant that you would often be queuing with the pensioners who



were cashing in their pensions. But that's another story for another day. I actually bought two albums and a couple of singles in the local Our Price record shop and was served by a friend, Alan Martin. One of these being the Velvet Underground album *White Light/White Heat*.

This newfound money also meant that I was able to do other things such as drinking in the pub, going to nightclubs or going to gigs. At the time there was a growing live music scene in Northampton, mainly at one of the small local pubs called The Black Lion. Being honest, I wasn't really a fan of many of the bands that played there, especially the local bands because they were playing a kind of post punk sort of sound. And by this point in my life I was much more interested in punk music. I was also introduced during the summer of 1982 to what would become known as anarcho-punk bands such as Crass, Flux of Pink Indians, Conflict and more.

I wasn't particularly impressed by the music of some of these anarcho-punk bands, but what I did like was the graphics they used to represent their political [nonpolitical/apolitical?] message and the fact that they clearly had thought the whole thing through. So you would get booklets, pamphlets, flyers, handouts and generally bits of paper with very tightly packed words on, which would be diatribes and dogmas against the government of the day, society, people, the army, hunters, vivisectionists, socialists, fascists and basically anybody who wasn't on board with the idea of peace, freedom and love.

### A Band is Born

According to the Sediton diary, the idea of a band was formed between Alan Smith and Mark Davess on a train journey home from a Bad Brains gig in London on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 1982. According to the same diary, I joined the band at some point in the spring of 1983.

So how do you decide who plays what?

In a lot of cases, bands formed naturally from a group of musicians getting together who could already play, or at least who thought they could play. The one thing that punk taught us, if it taught us anything, was that you didn't need to be able to play to be in a band. This is actually a complete lie. You found out very quickly that in order to be able to make any sort of music you needed to be able to play your instrument at least relatively competently. The Sex Pistols could certainly play, The Clash could certainly play and The Damned could certainly play. They may not have written seven minute epics in the same way that bands such as Pink Floyd did, but they could certainly write three-minute punk/pop/12 bar blues songs and play well enough.

[Caveat The Damned ended up writing the epic *Curtain Call* which comes in at a breathtaking 17 minutes, or 15 minutes live]

In our case we naïvely decided who would do what on an arbitrary basis.

From memory, Alan had already got a bass guitar; a kind of yellow thing with holes drilled in it which he had bought from the bass player of UK Decay, Eddie Branch, and so he was the bass player. Mark ended up being the drummer for whatever

reason, and when I came along slightly later in the process to join the band I somehow became the guitarist. I had some musical knowledge, having played the violin previously at primary school, and whilst the violin certainly wasn't for me at least I had some idea about music and musical structure. I think that certainly in my case it was a question of what did I fancy doing in a band, and being quite honest the role of guitarist in a band excited me and I probably thought that it would make me more popular and would impress people, especially girls.

So you formed a band what next?

So all of a sudden you're telling your mates about this new band that you formed; you talk about it a lot, suddenly you have a little bit more swagger in your step and you're suddenly a little bit more cool than you were the day before. All because you're going to play live in a band in front of people. And people are going to love what you do and people are going to clap you and they're going to cheer you and they're going to give you their adulation and you are going to release records and you might make some money and you might be able to spread your message of peace, hope and love to the masses and you might be able to change society and you might be able to get across the message that you desperately think the people need to hear.

Don't forget this was a dark time in British history. Margaret Thatcher was trying to destroy the working class via closing mines and taking away the civil liberties of anybody who stood in her way.

This was also a time when the Cold War felt very very real. I used to lie in bed awake at night listening to the sound of the jets going overhead waiting for the four-minute warning, waiting for nuclear armageddon and the end of the world. These fears were fuelled in no short measure by the album sleeves of Crass and Conflict, who kept telling us over and over again how desperate the situation was and how close we were to an impending nuclear armageddon. We believed very much that the world was on the brink of nuclear war and we had to go on CND marches to show how disgusted we were with them, and we believed that by taking direct action we could change things for the better.

And so that was the message that our band was going to sing about; that was going to be our bit to change society for the better.

But don't you need musical instruments in order to play in a band?

Yes. And that's where the problems begin, and that's where this essay really begins. Because I want to talk about and explore the actual economics of being in an anarcho-punk band, and explain what it was like, and try to record for the sake of posterity what actually happened, how we did it and what it cost us to do whatever we did.

So, I had a small amount of income each week, approximately £10. A night out down the pub would cost approximately £3 to £4, and that was for a pretty good night. A pint of scrumpy at the White Elephant or the Old House at Home [pubs] was approximately 40p at the time and a packet of 10 cigarettes was about 40p to 50p.

Entrance to the local nightclub which stayed open till two o'clock in the morning was between £1 and £2 at the time.

So I could go to the pub, drinking three pints and spending £1.50, walk to the Regent Club, pay a quid to get in, that's £2.50 spent already, and buy myself another couple of pints for another quid, meaning I'd spent a grand total of £3.50 up to that point. I could get chips and beans on the way home for about another £1. So obviously on £10 a week this wasn't a regular occurrence, and in fact myself and most of my close friends very rarely drank during the week. Certainly we didn't particularly drink at home at all, it just wasn't worth it.

[Caveat – I was living at home at the time with my very kind and supportive parents and my elder brother, not squatting or being down in the smoke on the Kings Road. So I wasn't ever going to starve and if I ran out of fags I could cadge a couple off my mum or even sometimes my dad. So I wasn't living on the edge. It was all very middle-class really. However, I do feel the need to say that I didn't want to just sponge off my parents. Whilst outwardly they were middle-class with a nice house and a decent car, I knew they really didn't have much money at all, and it was only through frugal saving and hard work that they had those things.]

I was nominated guitarist and I'd made friends with a lad called Steve Gordon, who could actually play the guitar and who offered to give me his guitar as he was upgrading to a better one. I jumped at the opportunity and got the bus up to his house in order to get hold of this guitar. He had told me a number of times that it was a bit of a crap old guitar and that in fact he'd sawed it in half in order to make it look more punk and now realised that was a massive mistake. Being a generous soul I decided I couldn't possibly take this guitar from him for nothing and so I paid him £7 and he told me to go and buy a book called How to Learn Guitar [or something] which was about £5, which I duly did the next day.

Looking back that first guitar was incredibly crap and the action, which is basically the distance between the strings of the guitar and the fretboard of the guitar, wasn't particularly good, meaning that you had to press your fingers down very hard on to the strings in order to be able to get a clear note. As a guitarist the first thing that you learn is how much pain your fingertips have to go through in order to become reasonably competent. You need to practice quite a lot in order to just be able to play simple from one open chord to another cleanly clearly and efficiently. Which means you have to learn to change from one finger shape to the next quickly and accurately. If you want to be a real rock guitarist you also need to learn scales and how to do solos as well. My own guitar style initially was to play single notes and to try and fit them in to whatever Alan was doing on his bass. But we're getting ahead of ourselves a bit already.

The second thing that you need as a guitarist is an amplifier and speaker or a combo, which as the name suggests is a combination of the two things. At the time equipment like this was relatively expensive and I didn't really know what I was doing or what I needed to buy. I did ask other musicians and guitarists for advice and generally listen to them. I don't really remember how I got together the money for the amplifier or exactly how much it cost, but I think it was about £100 from

a shop called Funkshun on the Wellingborough Road in Northampton. So all I needed now was some speakers to play through.

Luckily I found out that the older brother of one of my best friends, Dan Harrison, was selling a 4 x 12" speaker cabinet which only had 2 x 12" speakers inside it. But this was more than adequate for my needs at the time. I paid Dan Harrison £25 cash which I managed to save up from my Income Support and he agreed to wheel the speaker cabinet from his house in Parracombe Way to my house in Abington Avenue he did this by using a skateboard and a couple of mates. And so I was all set up and ready to go.

So you've got your equipment what do you do next?

At this point being in a band begins to become a reality. And so the next step is you need to write songs, rehearse songs and then play songs live in front of an audience at a venue. This all seemed a very long way away from us at the time, but we were optimistic, enthusiastic and very energetic.

Myself and Alan began to have some jamming sessions in my mum and dad's house in Abington Avenue and from memory the first thing that we tried to play was Public Image by Public Image Ltd. I seem to remember that we actually got reasonably good at playing a cover version of that song. [Probably the wrong notes on my part but hey, we were suddenly musicians.]

At least it was a start.

But of course you can't really practice very loudly at your parent's house and so you need to find somewhere to rehearse. Preferably cheap [if not free] and for us, again we relied on a friend. In this case it was John Comish, who was living in a converted detached garage at the back of his mum and dad's house in Kingsthorpe, which meant that we could play reasonably loud and try things out.

By this point we also had a singer, Tim Radford, who came up with the name of the band, Sedition, which he told me in a pub in a small market town called Roade; ironically enough, after a rehearsal that he had had with a local band called Dog Section, which also featured another of my best friends, a guy called Jim Heap.

And so those early rehearsals were just us trying to work out how to play a song, how to put notes together in a song, and how to put words to a song. I still have a cassette recording of one of those early sessions where we played a song called *The Raven* that Tim Radford had written the lyrics for. Listening to it again the other day I realised it was actually quite good and if we'd spent more time going in that musical direction, a bit more like The Mob, then maybe things would have been different. Some of those other sessions were of Alan playing a song called *Tube Disasters* whilst another friend of our Stuart Knight sang very loudly over the top. My amplifier had two line input jacks which meant that I could play guitar through one channel whilst the singer could sing into a microphone through the other channel.

And so at least the band now was a reality. In small town England at the time it was quite often the case that your friends would tell you things like "*you'll never play, you'll never get anywhere, you'll never do anything, you won't amount to anything, you*

*might as well give up now and stop.*" But something inside us decided that we would carry on even though we clearly couldn't play, we couldn't write songs and Mark didn't actually have a drum kit.

Mark was working at the time as an apprentice at Express Lifts and had some income, and at some point he bought a drum kit from Polly from Antisect that I believe had been previously owned by the drummer of Discharge. This meant that we now had to actually find a proper location or venue for rehearsing in. And so it was at about this point in 1983 that we began our relationship with the very famous local music venue called The Roadmender.

The Roadmender had been closed for some time at this point (1983) and effectively there was no large music venue in Northampton. I believe The Roadmender had closed as it wasn't commercially viable. Earlier in the 1980s it was a natural port of call for many bands touring England such as New Order, Wasted Youth, Crass and more.

I don't really remember how it happened but we ended up rehearsing in one of the rooms at The Roadmender. From an economic point of view this meant that we actually had to start paying out money in order to practice.

This also indirectly led to the second problem of being in a band in Northampton in the 1980s, which was one of transport. Most musical equipment, i.e. drum kits, guitar amps, bass amps and vocal PA amps and speakers takes up quite a lot of room and is also expensive. Certainly we couldn't necessarily afford to replace equipment if it was stolen, and so you had to physically move your equipment to your rehearsal room, rehearse, pack equipment up and take it back to wherever it came from. In our case I was the only person with a driving licence and I was also the only person with access to a car. My dad was kind enough to lend me his car in order to move equipment to and from the rehearsal room.

And so rehearsals became another drain on our dwindling finances. Certainly mine. Alan was working part-time as a cashier at a garage and so had some income, Mark was still working as an apprentice at Express Lifts and I was the only person on Income Support. This meant quite often that when money was going to be spent on the band Alan and Mark took the brunt of the financial impact. Looking back they were both obviously very committed and also very generous as quite often I couldn't afford to give money into things whereas they could. And so they did. By now we also had two singers, Simon Trkula had joined Tim Radford.

My dad had a very small Fiat 127 at this point and so we could only just fit all of the equipment into the back of the car with one person sitting passenger and so myself and the passenger would drive down to The Roadmender whilst the other non-passenger members of the band would have to walk to The Roadmender and meet us there.

My dad's car wasn't particularly suitable as a vehicle for transporting large heavy musical equipment around in. I remember one evening driving down a very steep hill near Margaret Street on my way to The Roadmender and putting my foot on the brake towards the bottom of the hill, and the brakes failed completely. This

meant that I had to suddenly swerve the car round the corner into another road and just hope that there were no cars coming. Luckily for us this incident ended up being a non-event and the car wasn't written off or damaged in any way. What it did mean was that quite rightly, my dad decided that his car wasn't going to be used for transporting musical equipment around anymore.

So now had to move equipment from Margaret Street, down to The Roadmender using a local taxi firm who would move the equipment down there in one of their estate car taxis. From memory I recall the cost of this being about £2.50, which, when added to the cost of the rehearsal room meant we were paying out approximately £6 a week between the three [five] of us just to rehearse.

As stated before, due to the fact that Mark and Alan were both working they would pay the bulk of this money out. I do remember occasionally having to pay for the taxi, but certainly I didn't put as much money in as they did simply because I didn't have the money in my pocket. At the time all of us were also regularly going to gigs by other bands around the country, mainly due to the fact that none of the larger bands would or could play Northampton due to the lack of a large enough venue i.e. The Roadmender.

From an economic point of view the fact that most gigs were in London, Leicester, Coventry, Birmingham or elsewhere meant that we had to travel to see the bands we wanted to see. Occasionally somebody like James Heap would give us a lift [in his dad's car] and we would split the petrol money, as we did when we saw Southern Death Cult in Aylesbury or The Damned in Brixton. But this was all a drain on my dwindling £10 per week. Petrol money to a gig in London would cost approximately £2-£3 if there were four of us paying in each, and entrance to a gig such as The Damned in London was about £3.50 which meant that if I went to a gig in London in one week that would use up most of my spare cash. At most gigs that I went to I very rarely had enough money to buy any drinks at all and so spent most of them extremely sober. It was quite a rarity to be able to go to a gig in London and actually have a drink. Sometimes people would buy me drinks which was very welcome, but I was never drunk at a gig in London.

Our other obvious way of getting around the country at the time was either via coach or train. Trains were eminently more preferable to the coach as the last coach back from London was something like 11 o'clock at night whereas the last train back from London was just after 12 midnight which meant we could go to a gig, get the tube back across London and catch the last train home from London. At the time with a student Railcard which cost approximately £20 you could get a return ticket to London in the evening on the train for £2.75. The tube across London was about 40p, gig entrance anything from £1.50 to £3.50 and of course you needed to have your fags as well. I did find out at about this time that kebab shops would sell a salad in pitta bread for about £1.25, which meant you could get something to eat as well if you were lucky enough to have that bit of extra money.

At anarcho-punk gigs of the time, many of the punks would try and blag their way into the gig for nothing or just plain refused to pay and walked in. But we will get onto the economics of actually playing a gig a bit further on.



So you have rehearsed your songs and want to do a gig – what happens next?

According to the Sedition diary, our first live gig was in London, at the famous Ambulance Station squat.

**First gig Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> Jan 1984 [Sedition Diary]**

Over the course of the lifetime of Sedition we only played about 20 gigs, which really wasn't many over a period of three years or so. Originally we played mostly outside of Northampton, but as time went by we retreated back to our home town. Possibly in part due to gigs in other towns dwindling as the "scene" in general began to fragment, and certainly influenced by a lack of finances and my personal malaise.

The general laws of supply and demand applied as much to the anarcho-punk scene as they did [do] to all walks of life. Simply put, if you were a good band with good songs you would generate a good following which meant you were more in demand and therefore offered more gigs and more exposure. This logically led to more supporters and so on. So for Crass, Conflict, Flux, Antisect and the other bands at the top of the food chain, gigs, records etc led to an increase in actual expenses paid to the band and also made it easier for them to release records. If you wanted to fill out a decent sized venue such as The Ambulance Station, Roadmender or The Bunker, you would need to be a reasonably well-known band.

As to the economics of this, the mathematics didn't often add up, which meant that the bands lower down on the bill would often pay to play and very rarely would get enough expenses to cover their costs. In my case, looking back, this led to a drop in my morale.

It was nice meeting people with similar attitudes, nice to see the other bands, and we had some great times and were treated often with respect and kindness by promoters, and the other bands were very supportive.

I didn't want to get rich out of playing in a band – to me the "message" was the most important part. But what I did want was to be paid enough money to cover the expenses of hiring a van, filling it up with diesel and hopefully some food for the trip home.

So what were the figures like?

One gig we lost £47 – travel and van-hire cost to get to one gig was £62 and money from the promoter paid to us totalled £15.  
[ref Sedition Diary]

On the income side at a reasonably sized venue the door price would be around £1.50. Because [as anarchists], it was frowned upon to charge more than this as an entrance fee, as that would make us somehow elitist, or seem to be money grabbing bastards, this meant that if there was a crowd of 150 people the gross [maximum] income would be £225. This money would then need to cover the PA costs [c£50 in 1984], security [where relevant], the venue hire [where relevant] and all the band expenses.

**Feb 21<sup>st</sup> 1986 – Peter and the Test Tube Babies 'rider'**

30 cans of lager  
1 bottle of whisky  
10 cans of coke  
7 hot meals [one vegetarian]  
[Sedition were paid £20]  
Entry £2.50 – Roadmender members £1.50 [concessions may have been £1]  
[ref Sedition Diary]

There would be gigs which were crammed with people. Amebix, Antisect, Crass, Conflict, Flux etc could fill a venue with 400 people easily on a good night with a good line up. Which meant they would have spare money to donate to worthy causes, and indeed benefit gigs were always a great thing to do as they also showed our solidarity with other 'rebel' groups such as the miners, the ALF etc.

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> Feb 1984**

Antisect, Sedition, Band of Mercy raised "*£180 for the Eastern Animal Liberation League.*"  
[ref Sedition Diary]

But quite often without a headline act the crowd would be much smaller – Antisect at The Roadmender could draw in maybe 100 people or so, paying £1.50 each meant a total income of £150. If there was a band travelling up from London we would try and pay their expenses [I say "we", but I wasn't particularly involved in the money side, other than trying to pay for hire vans]. The Roadmender would take a cut and other bands would get £10-£20 and the PA would want £50 or so. Which meant in fairness there was usually a small deficit.

**September 85 – Antisect, DIRT, Deviated Instinct, Sedition**

3kw PA: "£80 instead of £65"  
Security: "£50 instead of £20"  
Expenses: "DIRT and Antisect £100", "Deviated Instinct £15"  
Roadmender: "£20"  
"We owe the Roadmender £20"  
[ref Sedition Diary]

From a purely personal and financial point of view this led to me getting very pissed off with live gigs, and eventually we downsized to smaller local venues such as The Black Lion.

**16<sup>th</sup> May 1986 – AYS and Sedition [Black Lion]**

Income: £74 on the door  
Expenditure: £50 to AYS [expenses]  
£5 to promoter  
£16 to Sedition  
£3 expenses [taxi fares for Sedition]  
[ref Sedition Diary]



Musically as a three piece by this time [circa late 1985 early 1986] we had started to gel more, but the economic pressure and failure to play any decent sized gigs was taking its toll.

So you want to record a demo to get more gigs? John Peel airtime? Get that elusive vinyl release? Sedition recorded three demo tapes over the course of its existence:

**Rocksnake Studios** [8 track] – 3 songs in 7 hours, demo engineered by “Barry” and mixed by Pete Lyons [of Antisect] – £49 + £6 for ¼ inch mastertape and £1.50 for a cassette.

**Beck Studios** [16 track] – 4 songs in 8 hours [from memory this was about £100 - £12.50/hour] produced and engineered by Derek Tompkins [with help from Sedition].

**Progressive Sound Studios** [8 track] – 5 songs in 12 hours [final mix was only 3 songs] – £67.92 produced and engineered by Mark Thompson [with help mostly from Mark Davess].  
[ref *Sedition Diary*]

Recording in a studio is a strange experience, which others have written on much more eloquently than I. It consists of lots of sitting around, lots of tea drinking, lots of cigarette smoking and lots of boredom. Interspersed with some exciting moments, and then at the end it all comes together. [Sort of].

What you do learn quite quickly is now long everything takes and how much money this is costing. Twenty minutes to get the snare drum sound right, another twenty for the bass drum, or bass guitar sound or guitar.

What matters is that the time and the money is being eaten up.

Money which could be spent elsewhere.

Overall we had loads of fun in the first two studio sessions; it was funny, interesting, tiring, boring, but also a good laugh. It felt like making something important, it felt right and it felt productive, and I think we learnt a lot. But I am not sure we learnt from our mistakes, being not as prepared as we should have been, going out to buy batteries for a fuzz box, not taking in enough food and drink, not having enough fags. Certainly I never got my guitar sound right, the closest was in Beck with a great engineer and producer, Derek Tompkins.

And then you get home and stick the cassette in the player and listen to it.

Over and over again.

And you notice the mistakes, grumble about the mix and generally over-analyse what you have just produced. In my case I was pleasantly surprised by some things and a bit annoyed about others; that maybe was just me, but having read about many many bands’ experiences it seems to be quite a common issue.

So you recorded a demo, what happens next?

You buy cassettes and start copying them at home as best you can. I had a Pioneer

twin cassette deck which was pretty good at the job but copies of copies just aren’t the same as copying from the master tape. No matter. A cassette at the time was about £1 and postage and an envelope would be about 50p.

So on a limited budget it wasn’t possible to post them out en masse. More of a steady [slow] stream; you sent them out, filled with hope, to various places. Record labels [Crass/Southern, Spiderleg, All The Madmen, and more], gig venues, bands, music papers, the idea being to secure some sort of offer for a ‘proper’ release. These demo tapes would then get copied and circulated around the anarcho-punk scene willy-nilly. Which was fine, we weren’t worried about copyright – it’s about getting the message out there.

[With hindsight we probably didn’t send out as many as we should. I can’t honestly remember myself sending out that many tapes. Almost certainly due to the financial constraints that are all part and parcel of the scene for bottom-feeder bands at the time.]

And you wait.

We had some feedback, some conversations via phone and post but nothing particularly concrete came of this. I remember being offered a 12” single from Dig in Nottingham.

September 21<sup>st</sup> 1987 Sedition were offered “2 tracks on a skate LP or something, with Earache records in Nottingham.” [ref *Sedition Diary*]

For those genuinely talented bands who had honed their skills, gigged extensively and who could actually write and play good music [or at least the sort of music the punters wanted] the demo tape could lead to all sorts of exciting futures. Again, it’s really about talent and finding a niche, or a sound, or tapping into what the crowd wanted. The anarcho-punk scene was blinkered at times to other forms of music, and as the early 80s turned into the mid 80s the sound was becoming more and more heavy metal-based and then more hardcore US style thrash-based.

[Caveat – Those are generalizations – there were plenty of bands doing something different in that scene, but I personally didn’t really come across them.]

### Post Script

So Sedition split up at some point between Christmas 1987 and Spring 1988 – the date is irrelevant as are the reasons, but the important thing is the three core members of the band remain close friends to this day.

On re-reading this essay, it occurs to me that it may come across as a bit tinged with sadness, bitterness and possibly some resentment, which wasn’t intentional. The anarcho-punk scene was a vibrant thing and we had loads of laughs, met lots of great people, saw some exceptional bands, hung out with all sorts of people and it was a great time in my life. I look back with great fondness, but I wanted to give a flavour of the reality of what the situation was like for us [for me], rather than look upon it with rose-coloured spectacles.

If truth be told the economic side of being in an unsuccessful anarcho-punk band didn't stack up, and why should it? We weren't in it for the money, and I have no regrets at all about my time in a band. I enjoyed it. The camaraderie of rehearsals. Travelling together to gigs. Playing live on a stage. Making music with your mates. As Mark Davess often tells me it was about that, and not "success" or even being "popular" which mattered – it was the music and the fun which mattered.

There were thousands of anarcho-punks, and followers and it was a movement which grew organically out of a shared set of ideals, hopes and values. There were plenty of anarcho-punks involved not just in the music, but in the spin-off activities such as hunt sabbing, animal rights, CND marches and more.

As with all things, the joy of being young and free was what mattered most.

## RECORDING NO DOVES/LAUGHING

### Mark Wilson

Mark Mob remembers; The recording was done over two days in September 1981 at Southern Studios with Penny and John producing and engineering the session.

Various other folk including Crass members were milling around for those days, doing little jobs when needed, like changing leads, moving amps about, and more importantly making copious amounts of strong tea.

I recorded the vocals to both tracks on the second day, one word at a time for the recording. This was quite a change from the previous two releases (*Crying Again* and *Witch Hunt* both released on All The Madmen Records) as the vocals on those records were recorded live.

As you can imagine this was rather frustrating and somewhat draining on the spirit, but we assumed Penny and John knew what they were doing so I carried on regardless, and the single turned out well, so good on them for pushing me to record the vocal track in this way.

I chose both the tracks, *No Doves* because it did not sound like any obvious Crass label recording and *I Hear You Laughing* which was a live favorite of the Mob's followers and supporters.

There was no pissing about in the studio, no drug use or anything.

There was though many pots of tea being supplied and I also have a memory of Churchman Counter Shag roll ups being smoked by Penny and The Mob (when offered to us). I believe this tobacco could only be obtained from around the Epping area, so I had never tried it before the session or indeed since.

On the second day, one of the studio hangers on was told to go out and hire a four foot diameter gong, bring it back to the studio and set it up to be recorded for the *No Doves* track.

Most of the band had a go at trying to hit this gong correctly. Spent over an hour getting the gong sound right in the mix.

Whether Josef's gong sound went onto the final mix is anyone's guess. It may well have been rerecorded after the band had left the studio!

After over an hour of hearing just a gong sound it all sounded much the same and it could have been any of the recorded takes on the finished recording. Perhaps even my effort.

Around a month or so after the recording sessions I was sent a test pressing of the *No Doves* 7" single.

This version had the gong, the drums, the bass and my vocals. The other track *I Hear You Laughing* had the baby crying added towards the end of the track.



In the package with the test pressing was a letter from Penny suggesting that more should be done with the recording of *No Doves*.

I agreed to let Penny work on the recording in the studio without my or the other members of The Mob's interference.

I got sent a 'finished' copy of the release that would become the only Mob record released on Crass Records and got a bit of a shock when I heard the synths and the choir that had been added to the *No Doves* track.

Josef Porta remembers; As I recall, Penny and Pete Wright were engineering with John Loder.

We were in Southern the day after Alvin Stardust had a recording session there!

The usual Crass approach in the studio was rigidly Stalinist – as I recall bands really had no say in what went on. Not a bad idea really, as no one can fuck up a recording session like a bunch of musicians.

Mind you, we had a good laugh at the crying babies after we heard it.

We weren't invited to the mixing, and it was presented to us as a finished recording – I don't recall there being any 'what do you think of this' in the matter, not that it would have been any better for us being there.

I think we did it over two days. There was no fraternizing before or after, we came up on the bus from Hackney and went home again each day. I never went to Dial house with the Mob, and I presume Mark chose the tracks for the single.

I don't recall it being discussed with Curtis and myself at the time.

Personally, I think the artwork is the best thing about it.

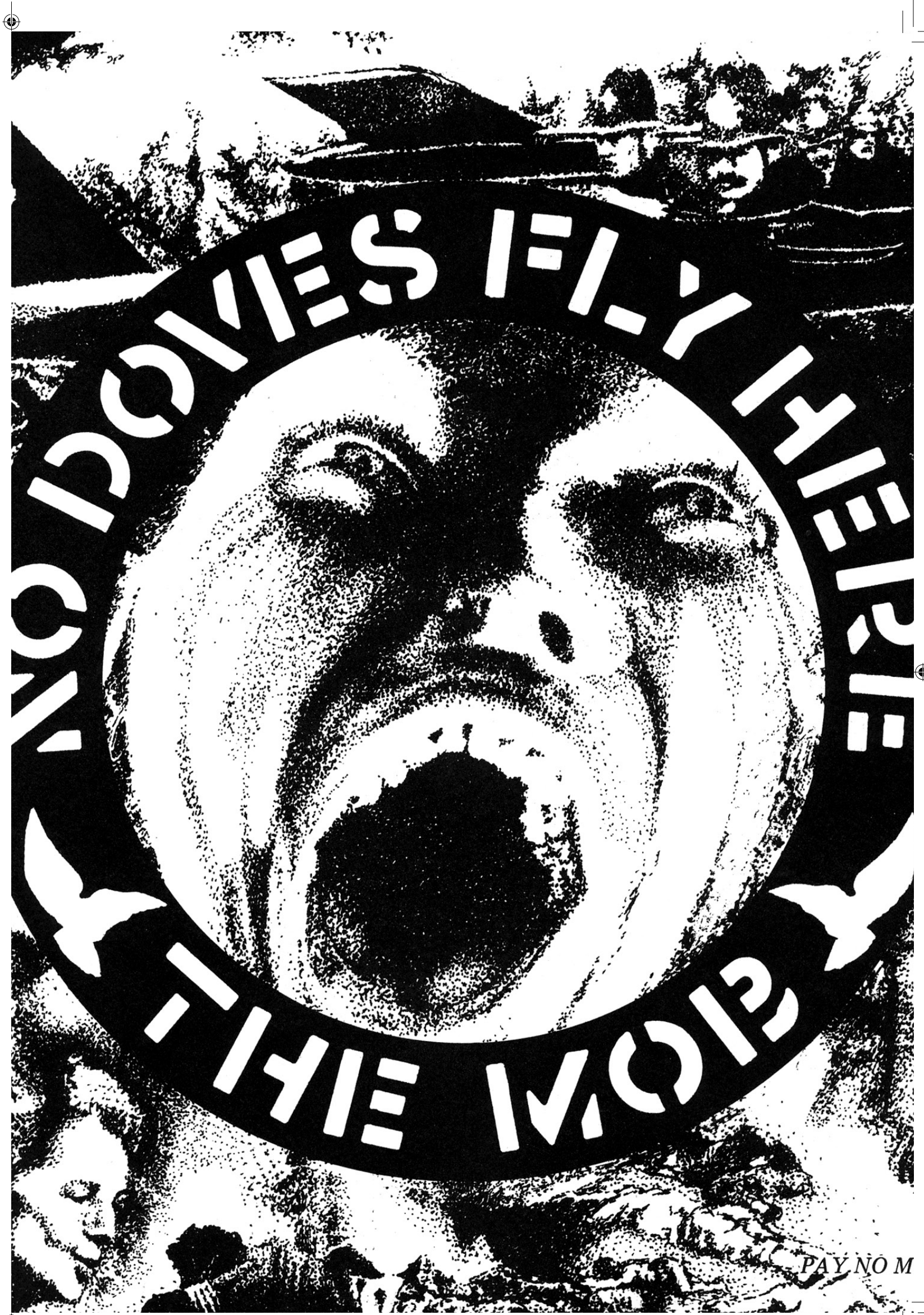
The tracks seemed flat. My drumming is clonky and inappropriate. Curtis' bass is, as always, superb, but the overall sound is limp and apologetic.

The same I felt with the Zounds effort. I don't think Penny really knew how to produce electric guitars – I'm not saying I do, but I know a man who does, and you can hear the difference.

The electric guitar is the essential element of any punk record in my personal opinion, and unless it sounds like the Sex Pistols on *Holidays in the Sun* then it's a waste of time.

Mind you, I'm happy to have been a small part of the whole Crass thing. I thought it was magnificent at the time.

Can't say it changed my life significantly, but it was an experience not to forget.









WHOMEVER PUTS HIS HAND ON ME  
TO GOVERN ME IS A USURPER AND A TYRANT.  
I DEFEAT HIM MY ENEMY



Pierre-  
Joseph  
Proudon



CONFESSIONS OF A PRE-TEEN PUNK

Chris Low



I'm often asked "What was it like to have been into punk at such a young age?" The honest answer is it was never something I gave any thought.

I grew up in Stirling, a town (now accorded City status) in Central Scotland. From an early age, amongst my peers and school friends, there were only two main interests: music and football. Well, there was sectarianism (which I always thought stupid) and fighting (which I always found painful). So it was music and football. Football seemed to combine both fighting and sectarianism and subsequently never held much allure so it was music that held most appeal. And for me that meant punk.

While too young to have got into punk in 1977 I do remember the shock-horror newspaper stories and the incredible photos of Kings Road punks in the papers and on the news. More than anything, I'll never forget seeing my first punks on a shopping trip into town with my mum. With their green hair and bin-liners I thought they looked like they'd beamed down from outer space! Now, every seventies kid, brought up on a diet of Dr Who, Star Wars and old black & white Sci-Fi shows on morning time children's television harboured dreams of being a spaceman... A year later, it's 1978 and I'm nine years old. The clammy hand of pragmatism has alighted on my shoulder and being a spaceman seems as unlikely as... well, flying to space. Why not be the next best thing? I didn't have pointy Vulcan ears or speak like Davros but I could certainly nick the safety pins from my mum's sewing box and stick them through my Concorde-lapelled shirt and proclaim myself the first PUNK in my class at school. I identified as 'a punk' before I'd ever heard a punk song.

Then one Saturday afternoon, whilst trying to be Evil Knievel or Tony Alva in the car park of the youth centre/discotheque our house looked onto, I see those same local punks again. This time they're carrying guitars and banging on the door to be admitted to the youth club's sports hall. From where an exhilarating racket is soon blasting. Never backwards at being forwards I'm dared by my mates to take a peek at what's going on inside and, right enough; the punks have set up and are having a rehearsal. They're pulling their best Lydon leers and Steve Jones swaggers to the evident delight of the girls in pencil skirts and platform shoes and ostentatious disdain from the boys in flares and plimsolls, deprived of their Saturday afternoon kick-about. They call themselves K-OS and though they only seemed to have one

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OUR 'POLITICS' OR LACK OF ... ) DAVE BELIEFS AND MINE ARE ALMOST IDENTICAL EXCEPT THAT HE IS MORE TOLERANT OF RED SCUM THAN I AM. WE ARE NOT REALLY ANARCHISTS ALTHOUGH, LIKE SPIKE, MOST OF OUR BASIC LIBERTARIAN PRINCIPLES ARE SIMILAR (AND OCCASIONALLY IDENTICAL) TO THOSE OF ANARCHISM. WE AREN'T TECHNICALLY PACIFISTS EITHER, BUT NEITHER ARE WE IN FAVOUR OF ARMED REVOLUTION. WE ARE AGAINST ALL FORMS OF MILITARISM EXCEPT PERHAPS A PEOPLES' MILITIA, RUN BY THOSE IT EXISTS TO PROTECT. HAH, VERY IDEALISTIC. ANARCHISMS MAY BE A RATHER IDEALISTIC DREAM, BUT THERE'S NO HARM IN WORKING TOWARDS SOMETHING APPROACHING IT. IS THERE? BOTH DAVE AND SPIKE ARE ATHEISTS. I AM ER NOT AN ATHEIST. BUT WHO CARES ABOUT THAT? CLASS WAR - LET ME INFORM YOU THINKS WE'RE TURNING A BIT MILITANT IN OUR OLD AGE. I CAN TELL YOU THAT CLASS WAR IS ABOUT PEOPLE'S REFUSAL TO BE HERDED INTO A LABEL OR CATEGORY AND BE SOLD OUT BY A POLITICAL PARTY (THOUGH THIS IS FAR FROM REALISTIC AS MOST PEOPLE ARE ONLY TOO WILLING TO BE USED BY A POLITICAL PARTY, EVEN BANDS - WITNESS CRISIS AND THE REDSKINS AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, SKEWDRIVER). IT IS NOT SAYING THAT CLASS WAR IS THE MEANS TO INSTANT ANARCHY. IT IS SAYING THAT CLASS WAR IS UNDERSTANDABLE AND POSSIBLY BENEFICIAL, DESPITE THE OBVIOUS HORRIFIC BLOODSHED THAT IT WOULD OCCUR IF SUCH A THING HAPPENED. "BLOW IT UP/BURN IT DOWN/KICK IT TO THE CURE" IS DESIGNED TO BE DISCONNECTED AT THE SPECIFIC TARGETS LIKE THE LIST OF BANKS, THE MONASTERY, THE ARMED FORCES, THE ARMY, THE POLICE, LABOUR UNIONS, NOT TO MENTION THE ARK PARENTS WHO WOULD ASSASSINATE A COUPLE OF CHILD, MORE THAN YOU OR PEOPLE WHOSE PARENTS HAVE WORKED A BLOODY HARD AND BOUNGT THEMSELVES, NICE TABLE OR A FREEZER. IVE ALSO GOT A NICE TABLE BUT I GOT MINE IN THE CLASSROOM BECAUSE IVE SO MUCHEN HUB. WE'VE GOT MORE IN COMMON WITH CLASS AND CO. THAN WE HAVE WITH CLASS WAR OR XTRA. SORRY TO DISILLUSION YOU! Andy 1983.

DAVE

29



‘song’/chord sequence/drum beat I stayed watching in awe for the rest of the afternoon. Fuck being Evil Knievel or Tony Alva.

Once I’d been told John Peel always played punk songs, my nights were spent listening to his show on a mini transistor radio with a single earphone under the covers after ‘lights out’. Any pocket-money went on buying punk singles from Hayes Music, the only local store that sold records and had a rack of ‘PUNK ROCK’ albums. The sign advertising this was illustrated with safety pins surrounding ransom note-type text decorated with green and yellow splodges which the shop assistant once informed me was meant to be leopard skin. I’d previously thought it was meant to be vomit, which would have been much better, so was quite disappointed by this revelation. My Christmas present that year was a copy of Sham 69’s conceptual opus *That’s Life*, insisting it was given an inaugural spin while we sat down to Turkey and sprouts. Grandma was not impressed. Strangely the record player needle always seemed to have ‘fallen off’ on subsequent Christmas days. My punk collection was also expanded by nefarious means, namely prizing cassettes out of the display cases in Woolworths with a screwdriver or slipping copies of *Sounds* or the *NME* inside the newspapers my folks sent me up to the local newsagents to buy. If the provenance of any of these acquisitions was ever questioned they’d been “given by a friend”.

My appearance became more outre too – rips suddenly appeared on “perfectly good clothes” or “a big boy” had grabbed me walking home from school and scrawled X-RAY SPEX, DESTROY and JOHNNY ROTTEN RULES in marker pen on my schoolbag. Not knowing that ‘hair bleach’ meant peroxide, after dousing my head with Domestos, I ended up with scabs the size of pound coins on my scalp – albeit with hair of a rather pleasing orangey hue sprouting from them. This was followed by a chorus of ridicule and “piss the pool” jibes after subsequently trying to streak it with the ink squeezed out of Biro pens the night before a school swimming lesson.<sup>1</sup>

Around this time, our next-door neighbours, popularly known on our street as “The Hippies” or “The Hairies”<sup>2</sup> took on a new flat-mate: Jamzy McDonald, bass player in Stirling’s Premier Punk Band – The Fakes.<sup>3</sup> He was most certainly not a ‘Hairy’. Posters about town advertise The Fakes are playing on the roof the MacRobert Centre a short walk up the road. At a Punk Festival. It’s open-air and it’s FREE so I’ll be able to see them! It doesn’t get any better than this! FUCK FLYING TO SPACE!!<sup>4</sup>

*The Great Rock ‘n’ Roll Swindle* had been released, Legs & Co had strutted their stuff to ‘Silly Thing’ on *Top of The Pops* and now EVERYONE was into punk.<sup>5</sup> The Punk Festival Saturday comes and myself and a couple of friends sneak out in our best, badge-festooned punk threads, all wearing plastic kids sunglasses which were de rigueur at the time. We’re in seventh heaven pogoing about to the cream of central Scotland’s punk talent: FK9, The Cuban Heels,<sup>6</sup> The Vertical Smiles<sup>7</sup> and, of course, local heroes, The Fakes. Shortly after I was lucky enough to attend Sham 69’s “Last Stand” at Glasgow Apollo when Steve Jones and Paul Cook, following the recent Pistols split, brought the house down by joining Pursey & co onstage for the encore.

From then on I tried to get into as many punk gigs as I could. “Get into” being the operative term. As my team of mini-punks were still only ten, eleven or twelve we couldn’t afford to attend gigs at the established venues or, needless to say, get into

pub gigs. Thankfully, Pathfoot, which was part of Stirling University Student Union had an impressive roster of bands playing nearly every month: The 1979 Two Tone Tour featuring Madness, The Specials & Selector was the first gig I saw there with my best pal, chaperoned by his big brother and his girlfriend.<sup>8</sup> The Skids, Siouxsie & The Banshees and The Fall are three other memorable nights that followed. Plus many other bands once we found a way to negotiate the obstacle to gig-going imposed by 50p a week pocket-money, long depleted piggy-banks and well-hidden purses.

Even when bands were playing who we didn’t have any interest in seeing we’d still go up and hang about outside, trying to tap cigarettes from gig-goers queuing up. One night, sneaking about round the back while some band was playing, I discovered the pool table room had its fire-door ajar, small groups of students popping out every now and then to huddle together, sharing large, strange looking cigarettes. As the ubiquitous, unisex attire then was the same for students as it was for kids – the snorkel parka or duffel coat – we determined that, similarly garbed, and with our hoods up, we had a good chance of being able to surreptitiously enter through this fire-door, into the foyer where everyone would sit drinking before the gigs started and then sneak into the concert hall with the scrum, rushing the doors when the first band took to the stage. Hoods up and heads down – it worked a treat! We repeated this on numerous occasions until being rumbled one fateful night and had to resign ourselves to hanging about outside again, enduring the monotonous mantra: “*You’re too young to smoke.*”



It should be stressed we certainly weren’t unique or even unusual in going to gigs at the age we were back then. In fact, to cater to their under-age audience many bands would play afternoon gigs for under-16s when touring. In 1980 I saw both The Exploited and the 4-Skins play matinee shows at the Edinburgh Nite Club. However, it was another band playing an ‘all ages’ show that made the greatest impression on me and an impression that, one way or another, lasts to this day.

Out of nowhere *Feeding of The 5000* by Crass was a record EVERYONE suddenly seemed to have. Perhaps because it was half the price of all other punk records or, as I liked to think, because it was twice as good! It might be heresy to some but I’ll never forget my disappointment when I heard how melodious the first

Clash LP was. From the menace exuded by their photos the music wasn't at all what I had expected they would sound like at all. Vocal harmonies and doo-wop "Woaaaaahhs" were what emanated from big sisters' bedroom doors. Conversely, *Never Mind the Bollocks* delivered the goods: especially 'Bodies,' which sounded angry and NASTY and just how I thought – and hoped – from everything I'd seen and read – the Pistols *would* sound. But hearing Crass' *Feeding of the 5000* was a revelation. It was a record that sounded one-hundred-and-ten-percent like I had always imagined punk SHOULD sound. No cheesy Transatlantic vocal affectations, rock & roll riffs or wanky guitar solos like many of the existing punk acts now going for a more polished or, to use a despised term, 'New Wave' sound. It was aggressive, discordant and relentless all the way through, with barely a moment to breathe. I'll never forget the impression *Feeding* made... Getting it home, putting it on our old record player with the speaker in the lid, folding out the booklet that came inside; sitting down listening and following the lyrics. After getting to the end of side two, it was like a bomb had gone off in my head.



We'd go round each other's houses and listen to the album, pouring over the lyrics and scrutinising the graphics and photos for any further clues to this enigmatic 'secret society' we felt we were part of. One of us once mediated on why they all looked so pale and were wearing black in the photos on the fold-out inner. "It's because they live in a commune" came the sage reply. After a brief silence someone piped up "What's a commune?" "It's a house under the ground and everyone who lives there is really dirty 'cos they never wash" our savant responded. Fucking hell! No wonder they looked a bit drab and peaky!

A short while later our dreams are rewarded when posters appear around town advertising Crass playing a gig at the Stirling Albert Hall. A venue, which ironically, I'd last been taken to by my well-meaning grandparents for a woeful, low-budget production of *Jesus Christ Superstar*. This time it was Crass I'd be going to see and the only Christ invoked that night would be when we enthusiastically sang along

"So what if Jesus died on the cross/So what about the fucker, I don't give a toss."<sup>9</sup> The poster said they were being supported by Poison Girls (What a great name! There were a few girls at school I'd like to poison) and local punk heroes du jour, now that The Fakes had split: Spiked Copy.

When the gig came it surpassed all expectation. Most immediately striking was how dramatically different to all the other 'big' bands I'd seen it was. The Clash, The Damned, SLF, the UK Subs... no matter how great their performance, always played in big, seated venues which reminded me of the Saturday morning children's cinema matinees I'd be sent to only a couple of years before. Only now there was the added menace of big, scary-looking bouncers to grab you if you tried to rush up the front. This Crass gig was in a rickety old hall where they had Christmas pantos and the local boxing club held their tournaments. And it was only 50p to get in. The way they came across so intensely on stage compounded what to us was already an incredibly strong, powerful image. With the mature years and baldy heads of some and the stridency of others adding a certain austerity and gravitas to their stage presence. While they were all dressed in black they didn't, after all, look like they lived underground, didn't smell from never washing and seemed rather jolly in a sort of 'new teacher wanting to make a good impression' kind of way as they thrust free badges and photocopied hand-outs into our greedy, snatching hands. This was something different. Something even more exciting and engaging. Something I wanted to be part of.

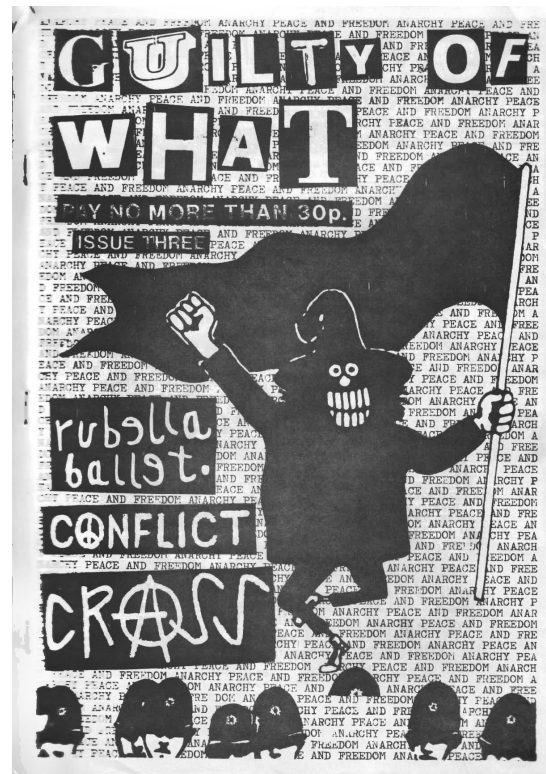


Me and my friends had been mucking about, bashing away on acoustic guitars and wash-hand basin drums for the past year. Calling ourselves The Skabz, our greatest achievement was receiving a dedication on the John Peel Show though, disappointingly, the bedroom racket we'd taped and sent him wasn't played. Now we had some direction and focus, consolidated by the release of the first *Bullshit Detector* album.<sup>10</sup> Everything else just sounded so tired and safe in comparison to



Crass and the small number of records that were appearing on their label as well as some other favourites like The Rondos *Red Attack* LP and the Six Minute War singles, purchased mail-order from Small Wonder solely on the infallible assurance they were 'like Crass.' Inspired by bands who sounded like they didn't know 'one chord' let-alone 'another' the 1977 clarion call of 'now form a band' at last genuinely seemed something that could be accomplished.

Around this time I encountered another aspect to the nascent (and as yet undefined) anarcho-punk scene that fired my imagination: fanzines. The Other Record Shop chain had opened a branch in Stirling and one Saturday an intriguing pile of Xeroxed paper and staples emerged on a table by the tills. I still remember the very first fanzines I bought: *Rising Free*, *Sunday the 7th*, *Kill Your Pet Puppy* and – my favourite – *Toxic Graffiti #4*: The issue before the Crass flexi one which featured The Heretics, a band who, to my eyes, looked so extreme and outrageous they'd beamed down not only from outer space but from an outer hemisphere far beyond! I loved everything about these zines: the demystification of the bands I'd bought records by but were never featured in the weekly music papers, the samizdat, cut-out-and-stuck-on layout and collages, the stencilled, hand rendered or enduring ransom note typography and the overwhelming sense of undirected anger in the polemics and statements that punctuated the reviews and interviews.



Galvanised by an expanding pool of well-thumbed fanzines ordered from Better Badges and cheaply-produced 'Pay no more than...' records, I embarked on both avenues of 'artistic expression'.


I called my fanzine *Guilty of What?* The name was an attempt to synthesise punk and my naïve understanding of anarchism: Guilty of What? Being both the slogan on a badge I had following Sid Vicious' arrest for, well... murdering his girlfriend and

also, coincidentally, the title of an article on the Persons Unknown case in one of the anarchist periodicals I'd been sent after writing off to all the seditious contacts listed on the *Bloody Revolutions* sleeve. The first issue features interviews with Crass and Discharge, already near-mandatory for any self-respecting fanzine, plus some local bands and a review of a Gang of Four, Delta 5 and Pere Ubu gig I'd recently attended. I sent copies to Rough Trade who sold it sale-or-return and in the local record shops. Particularly enjoyable was selling copies at gigs where you'd meet and get chatting to people. Some of who would then write to you, often sending a tape of their band, a 'best-of' which I later put out as a compilation cassette. Soon I'd be receiving letters and packages of tapes, fanzines and even records every week from America, Poland, Finland, Brazil, Yugoslavia... Some places I'd never even heard of but somehow they'd got hold of a copy of my zine and written to me. It even got a few listings in music paper 'fanzine round-ups' and an approach from Sounds writers Garry Bushell and Johnny Waller to do a feature. Though it only lasted three issues, I'm proud to say the last one included some of the earliest features on The Alternative (aka 'The Scottish Crass') and a vociferous bunch of schoolkids of similar age to myself from outside Birmingham called Napalm Death. At first we argued: I was 'Proud "To Be Punk"'; they believed "Punk Is A Rotting Corpse". But we soon ended up on friendly terms, corresponding regularly and swapping tapes of our latest obscure, unreleased discoveries, most of whom were based around the recently opened 'Autonomy Centre' in Wapping. Like a pre-internet 'social media' the fanzine scene with its attendant tape-trading and 'pen pal' network of international communication provided an incredibly vibrant and expansive universe for a young kid stuck in a small Scottish town. As well as a great way for making friends. Many of whom remain friends to this day.

includes live recordings and a practice...Price £1.25.

# NAPALM DEATH

Napalm Death are a band who've been doing their thing for almost a year now. The line up is Nick (of 'black cross' fanzine) - vocals, Miles (of 'twisted nerve' fanzine) - drums, Simon-guitar and Robbo-bass. Before their present name they were called Civil Defence but the bassist they had then wasn't really interested in the band and sold his bass for a C.B. radio. They only played one gig under that moniker and it was seemingly a shambles. Influences include The Snipers, The Sinyx, Crass and The Ex, who Miles tells me are the only group they sound remotley like but since I haven't heard them I can't comment on that. At the moment they have 10 songs which are all on the tape I was sent. Most are slow and plodding with jangly guitar and militant drumming but in my view are spoilt by the whining vocals. Lyrics deal with such subjects as the dumping of nuclear waste (in 'pollution'), tribalism (in 'rival factions') and punk (in 'punk is a rotting corpse'). A statement that sparked of a postal argument (all cleared up now) between me and Miles. The bands views are they are opposed to bloodsports, war, vivisection and tribalism. If you want to contact the band see addresses on the A to Z of punk 'zines.



**PUNK IS A  
ROTTING CORPSE**  
OH NO, IT'S FUCKING NOT!

**ANDY T** Andy T is poet from Rochdale, Lancs. You may remember him for his 4 contributions to the first 'bullshit detector'. He will soon be gigging with Crass using a new set of poems entitled 'weary of the flesh' and may also release

Our band, Toxic Noise, started to practice in the local youth club, just as I'd seen K-OS do a few years before. Saturday jobs, football and girlfriends soon led half the band to lose interest. Not suffering any such distractions ourselves, myself and the bassist joined forces with a gangly, bespectacled local punk with a remarkably good singing voice and his heavy metal, Rush-fanatic friend of even more remarkable

guitar playing talent. Both a few years older than me and calling themselves Carnival of Death, they too had recently been reduced to a duo. Combining forces, we adopted the name Distraught (A fore-running 'Dis-band' in name alone) and began rehearsing in earnest. I pounded out a primal, Mo Tucker style rhythm to every song as my 'drum kit', a birthday present that had cost £15 from the local music store, hadn't come with cymbals or a bass pedal. I didn't even know such a thing existed until being asked "Where's the bass pedal?" at our first rehearsal.



Having amassed a set I organised a gig for us and a band of school friends called Vengeance in a church hall on the outskirts of town, with a bus load of Stirling punks coming along to show support. A resounding success despite, for the first time, being on the receiving end of 'appreciative' volleys of gob courtesy of our supporters and schoolmates, we ended up playing our set twice before being ushered out by the exasperated church janitor. Phlegmy blitzkrieg notwithstanding, other gigs followed. We were thrown off stage after two songs at a school disco. At a Women's Aid benefit our set was impeded by the singer's three year old brother (there with his mother who had been press-ganged into helping with security duties) climbing on stage and wrapping himself round his elder sibling's legs. Before we entered the studio to record our set we changed our name to Political Asylum, releasing our day's work as the *Fresh Hate* demo. However, a few months previously I had just turned thirteen.

I was now a teenager and a 'pre-teen punk' no more. Thank fuck.



#### Endnotes

1. On a family trip to London in late 1979 I was granted the indulgence of a trip to the hallowed ground of the Sex/Seditionaries shop. Aggrieved that by this time Vivienne Westwood was riding the waves of "Sun Sea and Piracy" I shoved one of one of their remaining concessions to punk: an original 'Punk Hell' cheesecloth shirt (the 'Destroy' ones being higher and outwith my diminutive arm-reach) up my jumper as I left. Changing into it on my way to school the following Monday it was duly confiscated and returned to my long-suffering mother who immediately realised how it had been acquired. As a fruitless lesson in the evils of theft she ripped it down the seams and threw it in the bin while I stood blubbing and incredulous. An act which, given the price such Westwood originals accrued in later years, she would often remark on how much she regretted.
2. One of whom was drummer in Scottish Beefheart-meets-Residents psych-weirdos, Chou Pahrot: <https://stuwho.wordpress.com/category/chou-pahrot/>
3. The Fakes released one absolutely classic single, *Production* (Deep Cuts Records) and whilst producing my fanzine I posthumously put out a rehearsal recording of their on my short-lived cassette label: <http://killyourpetpuppy.co.uk/news/the-fakes-deep-cut-records-1979/>
4. Stirling Punk Festival review plus my retrospective Fakes interview: <http://www.boredteenagers.co.uk/FAKES.htm>
5. It's a belief of mine that whilst 1977 may have been "The Year of Punk" in London, it took another year or two to truly sweep the rest of the country. Furthermore, the emergence of Two Tone and the cinema release of *Quadrophenia* that same year added a tribalist rivalry which provided punks with a sense of oppositional unanimity. Sure many may disagree.
6. The Cuban Heels can be seen on playing their cover of *Paint It Black* in the opening scene of Peter McDougall's wonderful 1979 drama film, 'Just A Boys' Game' drama: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zAX6QNUA7w>



7. The Vertical Smiles' gloriously dissonant *New Clash Single* is featured on the excellent compilation: CD Messthetics #105: DIY and indie post-punk from Scotland, 1977-1981. It's such a wonderful racker I also uploaded it to YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gcf0iUcu2mI>

8. Though I was never a big ska fan – the tickets to this gig being a birthday present to my pal – Two Tone was certainly a musical movement that attracted the young. By no means were we the only pre-teens in attendance that night and, years later, watching the *Madness* film on video, this recollection was confirmed by the number of very young kids visible in much of the concert footage.

9. Having concluded months previously that God was no different to the Tooth Fairy I was genuinely surprised when my first precocious, agnostic espousals were greeted with abject horror. Grown-ups were an inscrutable bunch.

10. A record that, to this day, remains the greatest expression of the DIY punk aesthetic ever pressed on vinyl. Maligned for its 'quality' and 'lack of professionalism', which, of course, wasn't the point of the release at all, it stands as the first 'punk' record that validated the ethos that 'anyone' really could be on record and have their voice heard, even if that voice sounded like it was recorded down a phone or was accompanied by a biscuit tin for a drum.

## GANG OF FOUR PERE UBU DELTA 5 (W... I HAVE NOT DONE LONG-MAC)

AT STIRLING UNIVERSITY 21. MARCH.

IT WAS REALLY PISSING DOWN WITH RAIN ON THE SATURDAY NIGHT I WENT TO SEE THE GANG OF FOUR, PERE UBU AND DELTA FIVE. THERE WAS NO QUEUE SO I WALKED IN TO THE HALL AND WATCHED THE SOUNDCHECKS BEFORE BEING DISPERCED BY A BOUNCER IN NO UNSERTAIN TERMS! THERE WAS A "BETTER BADGES" STALL WHERE I BOUGHT A FEW FANZINES AND SOME GRASS BADGES. BY THIS TIME TICKETS WERE BEING TAKEN IN AND THE PUNTERS SEEPED INTO THE SMALL HALL. DIRECTLY, DELTA FIVE CAME ON. THEY WERE MUCH BETTER THAN MY EXPECTATIONS. THEY WERE VERY GOOD, BUT THE AMPS WERN'T ANY GOOD AND YOU COULD TALK TO THE PERSON NEXT TO YOU QUITE EASILY. THEY DID AN ENJOYABLE SET, THE BEST SONGS BEING "MIND YOUR OWN BUISNESS", "TRY" AND "CIRCUIT". DELTA FIVE WERE EASILY THE BEST BAND OF THE EVENING.

NEXT ON WERE PERE UBU, AND SINCE I WAS IN THE FRONT ROW DAVID THOMAS SPILT BEER ALL OVER ME WHICH DIDN'T EXACTLY PUT HIM IMMEDIATLEY IN MY GOOD BOOKS. THIER FIRST SONG WAS ALRIGHT. THEN THEY DETERIATED INTO NONINTELLEGIBLE 'MUZAK' THE LATEST SINGLE FROM THEM (NOT HAPPY) WASN'T BAD AND IT GOT US POGOING, BUT IT DID GO ON A BIT TOO LONG. THROUGH CHANTS OF "GET OFF YOU FAT HEDGEHOG" AND OTHER INSULTS THEY GOT THROUGH AT LEAST 20 NUMBERS. THEY DID A REDITION OF THE FLINTSTONES THEMETUNE AND THIER GUITARIST WROTE BAD ON THE BACK OF THOMAS'S BLACK JACKET. EVERYBODY NERR ME THOUGHT THEY WERE FANTASTIC BUT I DIDN'T PARTICULARLY LIKE THEM MYSELF. THEY DID TRY THOUGH AND THAT'S MORE THAN CAN BE SAID FOR.....

THE GANG OF FOUR. THEY TOOK HALF AN HOUR TO COME ON STAGE, AND WHEN THEY DID THEY JUST CAME ON AND STARTED THIER FIRST SONG (WHICH WAS AN INSTRUMENTAL) THEY DIDN'T SPEAK A WORD DURING SONGS AND THE ONLY ONE I COULD MAKE OUT WAS "HE'D SEND THE ARMY IN" DURING THE FOURTH SONG THE SINGER KISKED OVER THE LIGHTS ONTO UNSPECTING BOUNCERS. AND IN ANOTHER SONG THE GUITARIST SCRAPE A BEER BOTTLE ON HIS GUITAR WHICH PRODUGED AN EAR-SPLITTING GRINDING NOISE. AT THE END OF THIER SET THEY WALKED OFF WITHOUT EVEN A THANKS. THE CROWD WAITED ABOUT 20 MINUTES FOR AN ENCORE, DETERMINED TO GET THIER MONEYS WORTH BUT THEY DIDN'T RETURN.

## ALL IN ALL -

ALL IN ALL IT WAS QUITE A GOOD GIG BUT HAD NO ATMOSPHERE DUE TO THE FACT THERE WAS ONLY ABOUT 300 PEOPLE THERE. DELTA FIVE WERE GREAT, PERE UBU WERN'T BAD AND THE GANG OF FOUR WERE VERY DISAPPOINTING. AT LEAST THERE WAS NO BARRIERS BETWEEN THE AUDIENCE AND THE CROWD LINED WITH BOUNCERS (LIKE AT THE SKIDS) WHO IF YOU GOT ON STAGE GRABBED YOU BY THE HAIR AND LITERALLY THREW YOU BACK INTO THE CROWD.

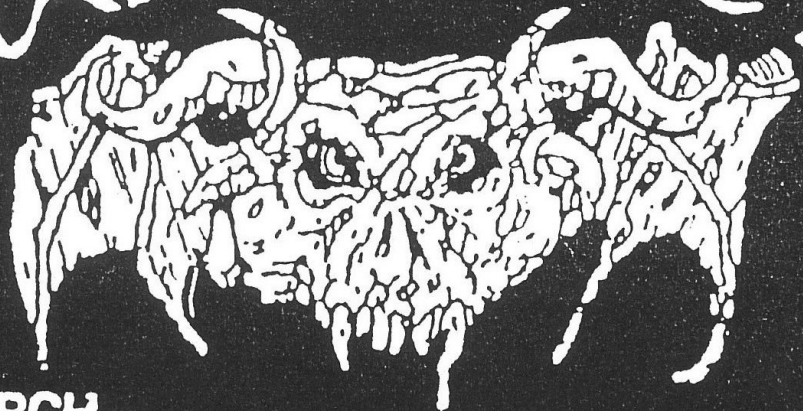
BUT THANKS TO ALL WHO ORGABISED THE GIG, IT WAS SOMETHING TO DO.

THIS IS THE ONLY GOOD GIG I COULD GET TO, BUT IN NEXT ISSUE THERE WUL BE EXPLOITED, S.L.F AND POSSIBLY THE "ADOLYSE RING" CONCERT.





# ANTISECT



## MARCH

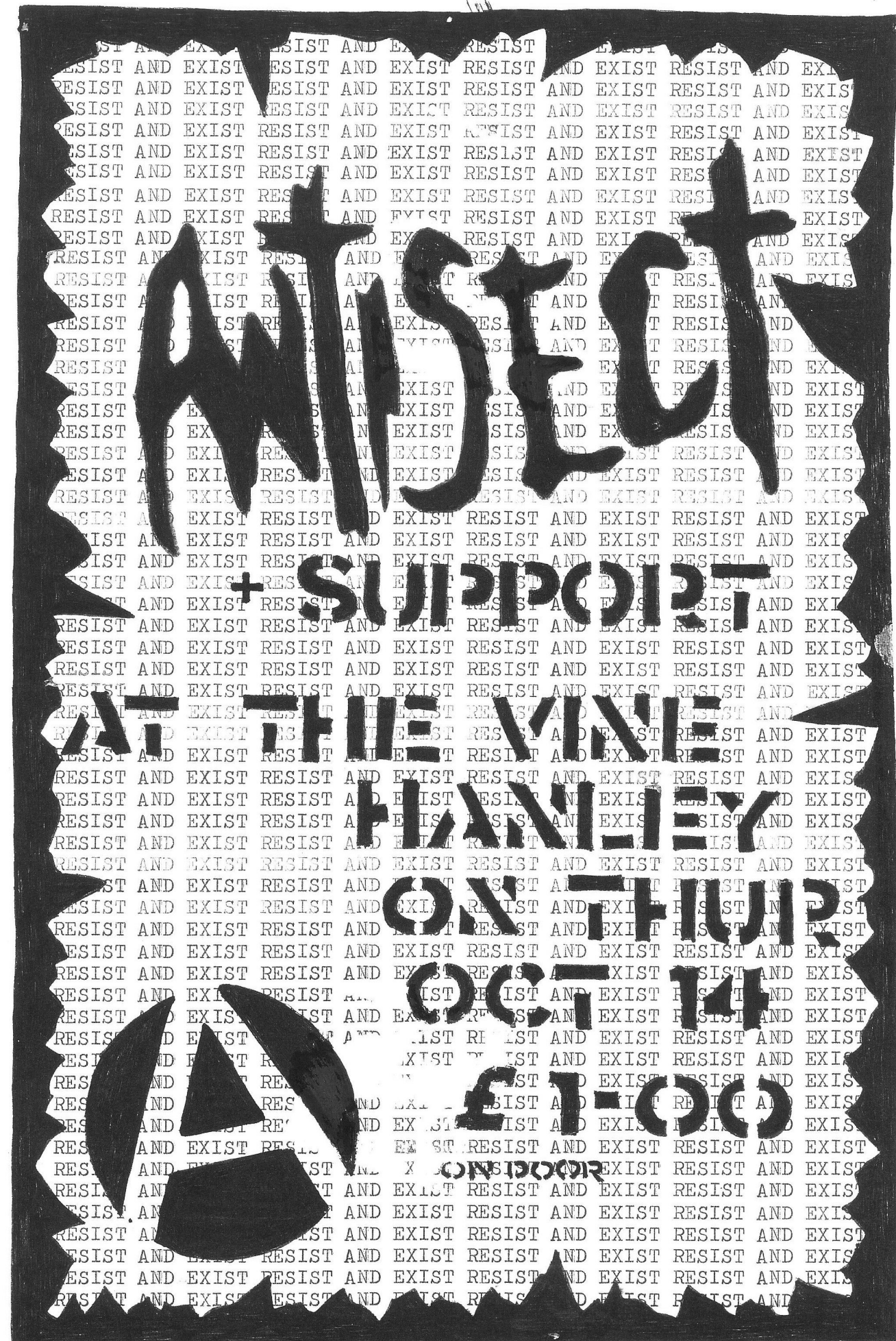
22nd BRIGHTON Richmond Hotel  
26th NOTTINGHAM Mardis Gras  
27th LIVERPOOL Planet X  
28th BIRMINGHAM Mermaid  
29th NORWICH University of E. Anglia

## APRIL

2nd MANCHESTER Boardwalk  
3rd COVENTRY Hand and Heart  
4th DERBY Derby Pride  
5th SHEFFIELD The George IV  
6th NEWCASTLE Riverside  
9th BRADFORD Royal Standard  
10th CARLISLE Stars and Stripes  
16th LONDON Brixton Old White Horse  
17th MALVERN The Herefordshire House  
18th TROWBRIDGE The Crown  
23rd PRESTON Raiders Club  
25th PAISLEY Stringfellows

Truth. Why must the Beast of progress seek to destroy us? @ "Autonomy" @....

OUR Earth... Soon to bear the mark of Progress, Progression..



that seeks only to destroy. Destruction, The ultimate of mans

Regression... Regression... Progression. We carry the fear of our Earth. The beast of progress



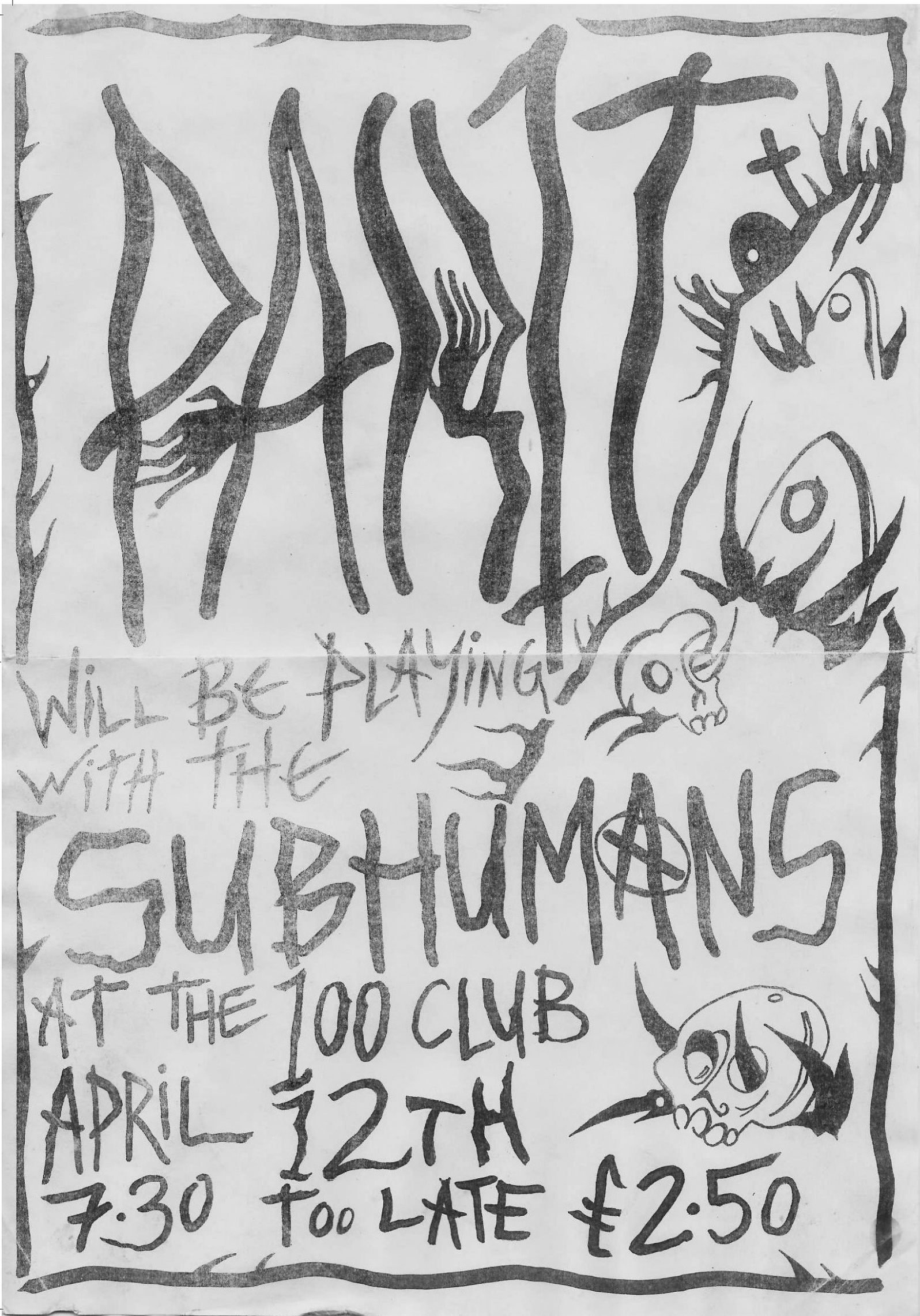
## THE GIRL IN THE BAND

Kathy Freeman



Most of my adult life I've remained obstinately unaware of the unequal roles of men and women in the music industry and elsewhere. Denial? In hindsight, maybe it's been a case of 'don't look down.' On a high and dangerous ledge it's best not to think about the environment but to just get on with the task. Over the years I've been obliged to share bills with some wildly incompatible acts as an example of 'Strong Women in Music' but never actively sought that role. All I ever wanted to do – and this hasn't changed – is make music.

In mid-seventies Liverpool, I'd just about heard of the Runaways. The only female musicians I actually knew were the Women's Lib posse in my neighbourhood, with their limp and tedious 12-bar strums about male chauvinism. It was SO much more fun to hang out with the boys, playing loud, loud, loud and practising aggressive





downstrokes till my wrist ached. Which led me to co-found the Accelerators, playing rhythm guitar, as punk rock hit the Northwest.



Women were getting a raw deal in those days, and I was stuck in an abusive relationship with the other guitarist. He'd slapped me across the face after a show for the unpardonable sin of losing his cable when packing up (and by the way, I don't know to this day why I was responsible for his fucking cable). No friendly caring helplines and forums back then, dear reader. Yet it never even crossed my mind to quit the band. It was heaven, hell and a dysfunctional family to me. I put another steel layer round my heart and got on with it.

The rush I got from hitting that stage as a team to play blazing rock 'n' roll – coupled with the adventure of ceaselessly travelling the country in mechanically unsound vans and supporting the likes of XTC and Buzzcocks – outweighed everything else. Sadly it also blinded me to what was going on in the wider music scene. Procuring

and playing gigs was my life mission, and while the likes of the Slits and Siouxsie Sioux were busy rewriting female musical history I was probably shovelling coins into a payphone to talk to some dodgy pub landlord or helping load a PA into a van.

With their dogged policy of taking the opposite standpoint to everyone else whenever humanly possible, the Accelerators were deemed to be far from politically correct. We had a serious run-in with 'The Feminists' who even picketed a show we were due to play\*

To quote the band Magazine, I was shot by both sides.

\*full account in *No More Heroes*, complete history of UK Punk from 1976 to 1980 by Alex Ogg, extract viewable at [www.kathy-freeman.de](http://www.kathy-freeman.de)



Fast forward to the late eighties and once again I was the only girl in the band. This time it was volume eleven grunge rockers, The Birdhouse. Again my focus was on the playing – I didn't want to think about sexual politics bla bla bla. But while they were generally respectful to me, the locker room banter of one or two of the band and male crew was anything but respectful to womankind.

Female band followers were generally referred to as 'it', not 'she.' There were the crude remarks about the singer's own unfortunate girlfriend who had 'an arse the size of the moon' When, as the band was hanging out in some dingy Midlands aftershow hotel room, the comment ... 'woah I'd like to give that a pearl necklace'... drifted across the room something snapped. I hurled my handbag at the floor (not the stuff of Amazon legend, but an effective conversation-stopper) and screamed at them to shut the f\*\*\* up. Lo and behold, by the next day the worst offenders had come separately to me with shamefaced apologies, each referring to the 'alter-ego' mode that comes with being on the road. A kind of Jekyll and Hyde mentality which incidentally also excused them for not showering for five days on the run.



My time in The Birdhouse was up when they decided to become the next Guns and Roses (only to disappear swiftly into pre-internet oblivion) But the experience was duly processed into a song 'Here Come the Boys' which I performed in my nineties punk-metal band Joyryde. This time fronted by women. 'Strong Women' if you insist.



#### Here Come the Boys

*Well look who's here, who's just hit town  
You better get some action, they won't be hangin' round  
They're lookin' for love, they're lookin' mean  
They know where they're going – God knows where they've been  
Here come the boys*

*They got social conscience, they really care  
They know what's right and wrong, and how to get their share  
When it comes to women, they are the law  
They don't know what a woman wants – they know what she's for  
Here come the boys*

*He calls his girlfriend up – she's not at home  
Well that's ok, he'll never walk alone  
Cause life's for living, not self-control  
And if you get diseases – that's the way it goes  
Here come the boys*

Audio: <https://kathyfreeman.bandcamp.com/album/joyryde-1991-1998-london-recordings>

## ANARCHO-FEMINISM AND GREENHAM COMMON: ALWAYS MORE THAN EITHER, OR.

### Lucy Robinson

With thanks to Alice Nutter, (and Christa Hook, Viv Peto, Jacqui Small and Julia Williams for taking me to camps)

The women of Greenham Common changed my life. Or perhaps, the women who Greenham Common changed, changed my life. They showed me that being a woman mattered, that women and girls had a role in the world, and that sometimes you've got to use what you're given. They also made it pretty complicated. These were activists working through and beyond the faultlines of gender.

I spent cold and sunny days at Greenham peace camp as a young teenager. Growing up in Oxford, around the local Quaker and feminist community, it was a short trip away. I went with other people's families, in other people's cars. I know that I learnt a lot there, and have continued to carry Greenham with me in lots of ways, in fact I feel like I'm probably closer to the politics of Greenham now than I was in my late teens and twenties. In some ways Greenham seems from another world of Cold War binaries. In other ways the culture, networks, carefulness about how we work together, and the playful bloody mindedness of Greenham, are more resonant than ever.

I want to trace the webs between Greenham, and other DIY cultures, in what happened before and after. I'm not going to try and represent everyone's experience at Greenham, as you'll see later on the very act of doing so would be at odds with the specificity of the camp. Instead I want to trace the strands that fed into, wove through, knotted and tangled, and carried on beyond Greenham. I'm taking a similar woven thread approach to what I'm describing as the DIY anarcho scene; one that pulls together music and squat cultures, more formal long standing anarchist thought and anarcho informed autonomous community organisation. Greenham was more than a protest, after all, and the anarcho punk scene was much more than a genre; they were intersections. To be honest, precocious though I was as a 12 and 13 years old, my politicisation was still a few years away from the DIY communal and squat scene of anarcho-punk in the early 1980s. So I've turned to a different strong woman, Alice Nutter from Chumbawamba, to trace the anarcho strings into and out of Greenham.

Alice told me how she first went to visit Greenham with Lou Watts and some other women in the band's van. On later occasions Lou and Alice would hitch to the camp. They attended the Embrace the Base protest, were empowered by the gendered analysis of war and the arms trade, provided practical support for the permanent camp dwellers, and witnessed the atrocious conditions. On one visit Alice remembered the ground being frozen solid; making it impossible to erect the tarpaulin for their shelter. Her memories of the camp throw up the creative tensions at the camp; around class, and around differing processes of politicisation. She made new friends at the Camp, but this sometimes involved having to justify the political choices she had already made. Alice was already living in a mixed sex DIY commune, but when the whole band stopped off at Greenham on their

way to a gig the men had to “stay looking chastised in the van.” The women at the camp had made sacrifices that had earned them the right to justify from Greenham activist orthodoxies: most notably “they had made different political decisions about men.” Her discomfort around some of the more spiritual elements (“looking mardy with a candle”), her awareness of the difficulties of being a part-time visitor to the camp, class tensions and different political loyalties, certainly resonate with the numerous accounts of the camp that I’ve heard and read, even if I don’t really remember them from the time.

### Here’s the History Bit

Greenham Common Peace Camp at an American airbase in Greenham, Newbury, was spontaneously established in late summer 1981 after a 9 day peace march from Wales. The camp was finally disbanded in 2000. During that time it became synonymous with a particular type of feminist peace politics. Living collectively, Greenham women turned the domestic – how the basics of everyday – eating, sleeping, cooking etc, are organised – into a political act. Greenham women performed their domestic politics collectively and very publicly. Like the Reclaim the Night marches against sexual violence and harassment on the streets, Greenham saw women taking up space as a political act.

This was further augmented at an international level. The base had seen its ownership and status change with the shifting of the international stage. In some ways the military base illuminated the changes in military power and need during and after WW2. The base originally became an airbase in 1941 as a satellite to RAF Aldermarston. It was taken over by the American airbase in 1942 and acted as headquarters for the invasion of North Africa in 1942. It was also important in the planning and back up for the D-day landings. It reverted back to the British Airforce in 1945, shortly afterwards it was closed down and returned to the local council. When the cold war heated up it was returned to the Americans and was used to hold nuclear weapons on standby for immediate take off until 1964. Then in 1979 NATO responded to USSR nuclear missile build up by deploying intermediate-range nuclear weapons in Europe.

In 1980 these were deployed at Greenham and at Molesworth in Cambridge. So even without the camp, the base as a space represented the shifts of Cold War power play on the ground. In December 1982 30,000 women formed a human ring around the camp at the ‘Embrace the Base’ demo. The date had been chosen as the third anniversary of NATO’s decision to deploy cruise missiles in Europe. A few weeks later, on New Years day, a group of protesters broke into the base and danced on the silos. The event became a point of entry for women from across the country to engage with a political campaign that was also a lifestyle or identity. These two examples of tactics used demonstrate the ways in which women’s gendered roles, i.e., women’s nurturing role, and the politics of pleasure, could be re-purposed to bring something particular to the political form of the campaign.

The model spread. There were sister camps set up elsewhere, in my now home town of Brighton for example.<sup>1</sup> The camp gained international coverage and celebrity support. For example Yoko Ono bought a small strip of land near the base that

housed a caravan for the women to use as a kind of respite, or safe-haven, from the police and from the gruelling conditions. Initially there had been men actively involved in the campaign. Four men had been among the 40 original marchers, but women rapidly felt that there should be a synthesis between their political analysis and the way in which their campaign was structured. In the end men were asked to leave and only return as supporters during the day and to help facilitate the support networks from the outside.

Sasha Roseneil has explained that the significance of this was not that Greenham was feminist because it was women-only, but that it became women-only because it was feminist. Signs and symbols of protest collectively wielded womanhood against war. Spiders’ webs were woven out of wool in the fences representing the network of individuals, whose strength only comes from working together. Women chained themselves to the perimeter fence, reanimating the iconic protests of suffrage. Baby clothes, ‘symbols of life’, and pictures pinned to the perimeter fence demonstrated the women’s stewardship for future generations, and was meant to shame the men inside the base and policing the camp. Women used mirrors, not to check their own reflection, but to symbolically reflect the base’s evil back on itself, and to screw around with the security cameras.

The importance of Quaker involvement in the peace campaign fed into the tactic of non-violent resistance in the face of arrest or eviction, but also maintained the act of ‘bearing witness’ as religious and political practice. Taking a position of non-violent passive resistance, the acting out of women-centred peaceful politics, did not, however, protect the women from physical attack with scores of women being charged with criminal damage. Long-term effects of living on the camps could be exhaustion and burn out. There were concerted efforts to evict the women, most notably in 1984 as well as attacks by both locals and apparently by soldiers on the base itself. One local campaign group, Ratepayers Against the Greenham Encampments, pitched their acronym, RAGE, against the peace camp. These women were also pilloried, attacked and ridiculed, often as middle-class, men hating lesbians. Greenham, and to an extent Upper Heyford, peace camps, took gender to a macro level – not just in terms of the significance it afforded gender – but in the way in which they acted as case studies for the emerging political tensions of the 1980s.

The practicalities of the camp count. Whilst concerted and universal defence was needed against different types of attack; satirical, emotional, physical, legal etc., the unity of this defence was built on many strands of difference. There were different camps around the base each named after colours of the rainbow. Each signalled a different identity, for example Turquoise more new age and vegan, Violet more connected to organised religion. Green gate was exclusively female at all times and seen as more ideological or intellectual. Whereas one of the other gates allowed male visitors. The different conditions in the different spaces mattered as different gates had different problems. Yellow camp was most like an urban wasteland, beset with traffic fumes and noise but had its own water supply. Women in Orange gate lived right up against the perimeter fence. This was not a rural idyll, but the different coloured gates represented the different elements of building a utopian community in harsh muddy conditions. There were divisions and differences with



in the camp. Sometimes these have been emphasised. The chorus of different women in the rainbow collective could descend into bitter disharmony in these harsh conditions. We could use this to create a version of feminist praxis driven with splits and fissures. But for me the possibilities of embracing difference, as a universality of difference is one of the most transgressive possibilities of Greenham's legacies. We might call it intersectionality. Or we might think of it as different DIY cultures, different sounds, styles and performances woven together. With each of these different political structures, languages and styles all seen through a refracting lens of gender difference.

Greenham was a cultural and subcultural intervention; it was a way of living the world into a different condition. Popular culture, especially music were central to the network of Greenham women, their supporters and allies. Beyond Greenham itself, benefit gigs around the country replayed musicians' roles in Rock Against and Strikers Benefits for the camp. In some cases, like the support of Yoko Ono, there were links between the countercultural politics of the Long Sixties and women in the camp. And above all, there was singing in the camp. The songs were sung collectively, the different voices together, each with their role, and rooted in the long folkloric history of women singing together. Collective singing brought together a chorus of individual voices and raised the spirits. The songs sung, like Naomi Littlebear Morena's 'You Can't Kill the Spirit', grew out of long roots in folk song, or more contemporary anti-war songs, but were adapted for the moment as a form of political dissemination. The simplicity of the song's lyrics and structure made it easy to pass on in written or sung form. Morena performed the song herself at the camp, as did Joan Baez. So weekend visitors or visitors to the large organised events could take their songs back to their own communities, or in reverse bring their own heritage to the camp and the *Greenham Women's SongBook* remains an important historical document. Folk singers also carried the Greenham story outside the camp, Judy Small for example sung 'Bridget Evans' on her tour in 1985. The songs left their own record. The Greenham songs were archived for the Danish Peace Academy by Holger Terp and true to the Greenham spirit of carefulness around power structures, Greenham women helped index the songs.<sup>2</sup>

### Experiences, Ideas, Action

Folk, and its connections to the earlier peace movement were not the only subcultural and musical connections through Greenham. Greenham was also woven through the growing post-punk anarcho scene, its history and its legacies. In turn, anarcho histories wove through Greenham as a space and life moment. George McKay, for example, pivots his story of the Peace Convoy around their visit to the camp. George Berger maps the history of the camp against the band Crass's chronology. Similarly contemporary anarcho activists trace their inheritances back to the Greenham women.<sup>3</sup> Pacifist anarchism from the earliest part of the c20th<sup>4</sup> is therefore pulled into Greenham, via the counterculture of the sixties, RAR, Miners' Strike and on to Stop the City,<sup>5</sup> onto Occupy today.

The DIY anarcho scene and Greenham were therefore, and remain, connected through shared experiences, ideas and actions. The shared strands were embodied in the tabloid press's archetypal Greenham woman. She was an anarcho vegan lesbian.

One Greenham song, author unknown, shone the cliché back at the disparagers in classic camp style:

*I Went to Greenham, cut some fence*

*Hugged some woman and it all made sense*

*Well I used to be a Tory, now I am a radical, feminist, anarchist, vegan dyke.*

*Now I'm a Happy Dyke*

Whilst obviously the song was a bit of a joke about the way they were represented, the song was also an acknowledgment by the Greenham women of the different personal political layers of the camp. A *Spare Rib* article by Joi Rathbone from 1987, for example, laid out the possibilities of anarcho feminism that we could recognise from Greenham; self-determination, and the politics of the personal and an emphasis on practical, direct, action and democratic organisation. Greenham learnt lessons from existing anarcho communities and in turn fed the lessons learnt on the camp back into later DIY practice. Women learnt how to make benders and tipis from the Peace Convoy for example, and the Greenham publications, produced in a DIY, democratic structure, and with the obvious lack of reproductive office equipment, can be recognised as akin to post-punk zines.<sup>6</sup>

There is one set of key players and moments who exemplify the knots that tie DIY Anarcho scenes to Greenham between their pasts, present and future: Crass. As Penny Rimbaud explained; "*a number of hardcore Greenham women came to it through punk.. and the people we inspired.*" Crass members attended the camp and their graphics, music and sleevenotes took on, and disseminated, the centrality of anarcho to feminism and vice versa, most obviously in the dedication of the album *Penis Envy* to female voices. But there were, after all no gods and no masters at Greenham and there were a wide variety of post-punk and explicitly anarcho musicians who practically supported Greenham and became part of its wider imagination. The band Toxic Shock were formed at the camp<sup>7</sup> Bad Habits wrote 'Greenham Common Women'. Bands like the Abandon Your Tutus, Oi Polloi! Poison Girls, Rubella Ballet, ska band The Deltones, the Au Pairs and the Gymslips played benefit gigs to support the women and contribute towards their extensive legal costs. These were in turn a way of creating new political spaces beyond the camp; the ULU benefit for example, was organised under the banner of 'Anti Sexist Noise'.

These gigs were part of a wider supportive web woven between local anarcho groups and Greenham. As well as disseminating information on the legal and personal attacks on the Greenham women, organising support for women imprisoned, galvanising support during evictions, and attempts to deny the Greenham women their electoral rights for example.<sup>8</sup> Anarchist publications like *Practical Anarchy*, *Freedom* and *Peace News* carried the message back out from the camp. *The Anarchist Worker* in Belfast and Dublin supported anti-nuclear activism, as long as "*the main area of activity was organised within the working class.*"<sup>9</sup> The local networks turned to practical support too. Local groups took shifts on Cruisewatch, monitoring the Cruise convoys, and organised peace vigils. Local anarchist groups in Reading for example, took turns to feed the camp under the banner BEANS ON WHEELS. According to *Red Rag* zine:

*Support for the Greenham Food Van continues in Reading. On 16, 17, 18 December, groups from East Reading, West Reading, and Caversham used the food van for one evening each to take hot meals to women camped at each gate. The meals were simple, substantial and vegan.*<sup>10</sup>

Alice told me what her background brought to the camp. When they first arrived at the camp they went to the main gate and immediately stepped up and starting cooking for the women. This came, she recognised, directly through her experience of DIY scenes and squats. As Rathbone suggested Alice's anarcho experience brought practical action to feminist thought 'You go somewhere, look around, work out what needs doing and get on with it'. The full time women were exhausted and as a visitor she had the energy to help nurture the camp. She *"didn't want to pretend that [she was] living there. [She] was fresh and had energy... and wanted to be a supporter."* Every time she went she *"tried to do things like that... to be useful in short bursts."* She came to the camp with prior experience of Direct Action. She'd already had that moment, when once you've been arrested a few times, and you look at who you are up against and *"you realise its just the police or the army... and what's the worst thing they can do?"*

The Chumbawamba house had been preparation for how to support the camp, but these were to some extent competing models, not just in terms of the gender issue, but also in terms of the process of politicisation. When Alice told Greenham women that she lived in a commune with so many men she *"got a lecture about looking after men"* – though as a visiting cook at the camp it was fine for her to be looking after women. It wasn't easy to have the women she wanted to support telling her that *"what I'm doing is wrong"*, and to some extent thought *"these fucking posh women are telling me what to do."* Alice now understands this as a response to the processes of politicisation as well as the bluntness of the gender lens. In the camp she saw women who were not only doing good things and making a presence, but who were also *"finding a meaning and discovering themselves."* The fervour of exclusivity that some have noted at the camp was, Alice suggests, a sign of how much the camp was needed. It was a training ground, a place to learn about feminism. As a teenager Alice had gone looking for books that would teach her how to be a feminist (Erica Jong's *Fear of Flying* (which was not a great influence) and Germaine Greer's *Female Eunuch* (which was). But her politics had been developed through working and living with Chumbawamba. For some women Greenham changed everything. It was a new life. But for Alice, her *"life had already changed."* She didn't need to unlearn traditional femininity. She *"didn't look like a woman, [she] looked like an anarcho punk."* Alice didn't 'have to escape to Greenham' to run away and join the circus. She already had a gang. She had *"already run away to join a different circus."*

Alice was already on her anarcho journey, which had equipped her with not just practical skills, but the political nous to recognise their collective significance then, but that didn't mean that Greenham didn't feed back out to Chumbawamba. Having been called to justify her mixed gender commune, Alice was determined to prove she wasn't patriarchy's 'stooge'. After Greenham, she gave the men a much harder time.

As I've suggested, one of the most striking shared experiences, and circular lessons shared between anarcho activism and the camp, was the recognition of the power of acknowledging individual difference. There were discussions over the specificity of experiences over race, for example. Yellow gate was dominated by the Campaign for Wages for Housework. These women challenged what they saw as the white middle class assumptions of some of the other activists. Despite the tabloid clichés about lesbians in dungarees there were also considerable differences and discussions over sexuality. These discussions took place in a context in which women's nurturing role was not seen as artificially constructed, it was the essential element of a distinct political identity. This was often summed up in the use of the term Wimmin, or in strands of feminist separatism that saw feminism as a spiritual force, linked to the earth. Alice felt the tensions between the two worlds in terms sexuality (though she did 'try her best to be a lesbian'), and in terms of class background. She told me a story that seemed to tie all the possibilities and tension together.

Alice talked about singing the ultimate Greenham song at the camp. The anarcho musician sat in a circle, with a large group of Greenham women and visitors and sung 'You Can't Kill the Spirit' for hours and hours. She was *"singing her heart out and really enjoyed it."* But when she went home to the Chumbawamba house she had to make a transition between the worlds. DIY could not easily bridge the divides. When she went back to the house and made fun of the singing, turning it into a comedy routine. She had to prove she was no stooge at the camp, and back home she had to prove she wasn't some posh hippy from the camp. She regrets making fun of the singing now. But it does illuminate something important about the strength in difference. You don't actually need to make definitive choices between worlds. Strength doesn't necessarily come from singing the same hymn. For Alice looking back on both Chumbawamba and Greenham, real strength comes from allowing for difference. There is a certain weakness in the idea that strong women are only strong when they all do the same thing, she explained. Instead community can be seen as a trail of strength between her Leeds squat and the Greenham camp. It is community that gives people strength to make their own choices and a really strong community allows for difference.

I've traced some of the DIY inheritances and legacies at Greenham, these were, however, strands in a huge, messy, multi-coloured web of experiences and allyship. Greenham women also had ideological and practical links with women campaigning over the Miners' Strike, Northern Ireland and with other groups, showing how motherhood and sisterhood were global political bonds. One audience member at the Rest is Noise festival where I presented an earlier version of this piece, had herself spent considerable time at the camp. She pointed out the high number of women who came to the camp from around the world (e.g., South Africa, New Zealand, Australia) and these women brought with them political experiences from their home context, such as indigenous rights, or environmentalism. It struck me, once again, that Greenham brought together the ideology of womanhood as the maternal guardian of the earth, combined with the practical skills and tactics from campaigning in a global context. This resonates with what Feignbaum called *"queering the housewife."* It also attests to the women at the camps abilities to utilise their networks and webs to get the message out there, despite the mainstream press and media response.

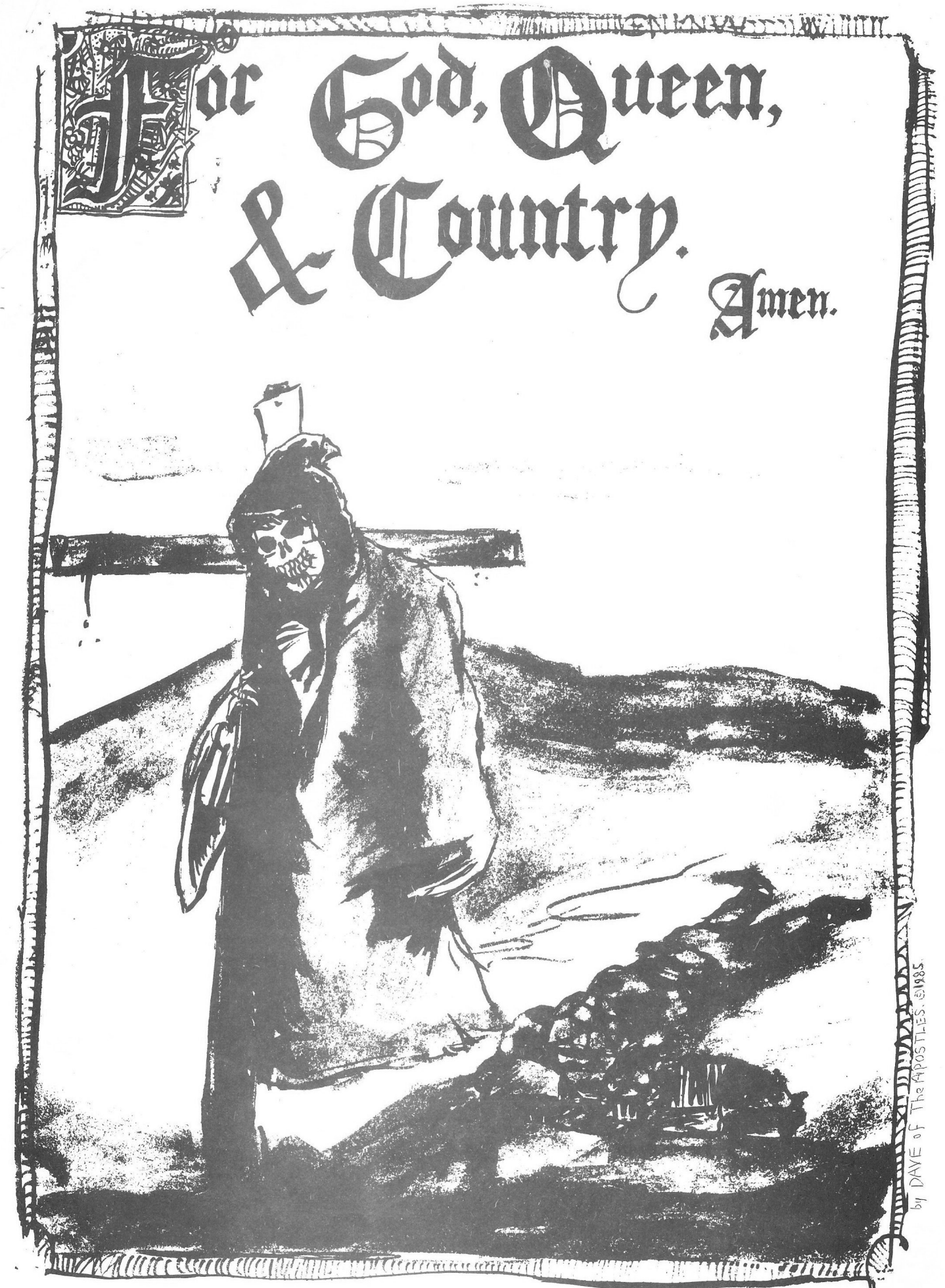


Here perhaps is one of the unworked through legacies of DIY culture and Greenham. We can consciously politicise our domestic structures, making how we organise our everyday lives the heart of our activism. But there are limits to the extent to which wielding a domestic femininity can fly in the face of patriarchy. The collective cooking in a commune, like the use of the symbols and contradictions of femininity at the camp, can also keep us in our place. Alice gave the Chumbawamba men a harder time after Greenham, but that didn't stop her looking after them, after all. "I've carried my servicing of men through my life" she said, as had her sister, mother and grandmother. As have I.

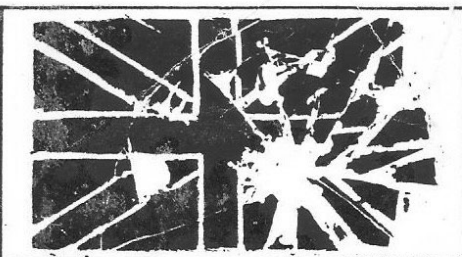
So for me now, Greenham was a point at which feminist theory, popular culture, performance and grassroots Anarcho DIY activism met, even if it was beyond me at the time. It has certainly helped me live with, rather than against, the power of subverting, or queering, women's domestic role. But there are two further lessons that I've carried with me from Greenham. Firstly, that there is a power in the way that everyday experiences and practical conditions can emphasise difference. But that more importantly, that difference doesn't have to be divisive. We can all sing the same songs, in our own style, and that when we do that a web of difference can be truly life changing and transgressive.

#### Endnotes

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# LONDON AUTONOMISTS

## THE LONDON AUTONOMISTS

### Who are we ?

Although some of us worked together before, a common identity only emerged in 1978. We were chiefly involved in making interventions at various meetings, rallies etc. Our activities were based at Rising Free, a bookshop in north London. However since its disappearance we have been pretty dormant. However the present climate of slowly growing discontent has drawn us out of the woodwork.

Our politics are based on the desire to see a British revolution. While such a revolution can only occur in the context of a world-wide onslaught on the bastions of power and privilege, we feel that it is important to concentrate on the situation in this country. The greatest solidarity we can offer to foreign revolutionaries is the active pursuit of revolution here.

Our politics are drawn from a wide range of sources and have evolved through the necessity of continually looking for their application in terms of present day Britain. While we realise that revolution must involve the complete abolition of the state, we are aware that anarchist theory falls far short of contemporary demands. The revolution will not be wholly anarchist as sections of the population will discover the need to attack the system without wading through anarchist books and magazines.

We see the basis of such attacks arising from class conflict with capitalism in all its facets and manifestations. The British revolution will by its very nature be opposed to all existing forms of political ideology and organisation. Although it may echo the insurrections of the past, it will go well beyond them if it is to avoid repeating their defeats. Although it is impossible to say what its precise nature will be, we know that it will start as, and be based on autonomous class action. By this we mean working class opposition to capital in all its forms. It will organise itself outside and against all the structures of capital (in particular the left and the unions).

Despite the election of a strong Tory government, there are simmerings of discontent below the surface. If anything the election signifies a reluctance by people to vote for a reformism they know cannot come up with the goods. We do not predict an immediate or close to hand revolutionary upsurge. But we do foresee the emergence of tenacious struggles which go well outside the normal capitalist framework of compromise and co-option. It is through such struggles that the groundwork for a future revolutionary movement will be done.

In this context, we see the need to make a revolutionary contribution to the development of such struggles. We must resist all attempts to bundle such struggles up into single issue campaigns. On the contrary we emphasize that a confrontation with one part of the system calls the rest of the system into question.

If the anarchist movement is to contribute to this development of a revolutionary movement, it is essential that it moves away from its practice of defending an abstract ideology and returns to a practice of being at the forefront of struggle. This more than anything will overcome the isolation and rootlessness of many anarchist groups. Otherwise anarchism will be confirmed as the historical irrelevance which some people already claim it to be.

## TALES FROM THE GHOST TOWN. ADVENTURING IN REALITY 1979-1985

### Alan Rider

Coventry 1979. The City in those days was suffering from the effects of the worst recession since the war. The industrial heritage, which had built much of the city's wealth and provided the majority of its citizens with employment, was collapsing. Household names like Standard Triumph, Massey Ferguson, Jaguar Daimler, and Courtaulds were in a spiral of decline with their factories shedding jobs and workers fast. Unemployment in the area was climbing, Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Government were newly in power following years of stumbling Labour (mis)rule, there were strikes and riots across the country, and an air of gloom and desperation was everywhere.

It was as a teenager in Coventry living against this grim backdrop that I came across my first fanzine. I was in my final year of school at Binley Park Comprehensive, a huge and intimidating place with over 2000 pupils drawn from some of the toughest areas in Coventry. The Willenhall Estate was one that particularly stuck in my mind as I'd been round to a friend's house after school and been shocked by the burnt-out cars and boarded up abandoned houses that I passed on my way there. This made Binley Park a harsh environment to survive in and when punk came along during my early years there I eagerly embraced it as a glamorous and empowering alternative, in my head and heart at least. My dress sense, however, remained long-haired and flared-trouseried along with the majority of my friends. Standing out was a far too dangerous a thing to do in the vicious atmosphere that masqueraded as education at Binley Park. That could get you seriously beaten up!

I had been dimly aware of the existence of fanzines largely through reading about London based punk fanzines such as *Sniffin' Glue* and *Ripped and Torn* in articles in the Sunday Times and weekly music papers such as *Sounds* and *NME*. These, as with the rest of the punk scene, seemed to belong to the rarefied London world of Kings Road boutiques, the Sex Pistols, and clubs such as the Roxy and 100 Club. All of which I'd read about and imagined myself going to, but none of which were remotely within my reach as I was both underage, lacked anything like the necessary funds or confidence, and lived miles from where the nearest action was. Although many of the main punk acts did visit Coventry, invariably they played in licensed clubs, which I couldn't have got into even if I'd tried. In fact I was regularly refused entry to clubs even when I was over 18 as I looked young for my age, meaning I usually had to carry ID with me everywhere.

Despite this musical revolution, the most popular musical genres at school stubbornly remained progressive rock and heavy metal and I duly joined in by going along to Queen, Thin Lizzy and Judas Priest concerts with my friends, although the records I played at home were by The Stranglers, The Damned, Stiff Little Fingers, Ramones and US novelty speed punks, The Dickies. By the time I was reaching the end of my sentence (for that's what it felt like at the time) at Binley Park I still had my feet firmly in both musical camps, on the surface at least.



That was soon to change though with the help of my friend Nigel. Nigel was the token school punk and was constantly evicting Genesis, Yes and ELP from the record player in the school Common Room in favour of the Jam, Clash and The Specials, much to the annoyance of, well, pretty much everyone really. Apart from me that is, and so it was only natural that we quickly became good friends. In common with many other ‘punks’ of the time (anarchist or otherwise), he was from a solid middle class background. His father was an Assistant Chief Constable in the West Midland Police. However, that meant that he (Nigel that is, not his father!) could afford to buy lots of records and also had his own bedroom. As I had to share a bedroom with my younger brother in the cramped terraced house that would later become the nerve centre of my fanzine operation, this seemed like an unheard of luxury to me. As a result I used to spend time most days after school hanging out with him in his room, playing records and pretending I was cool.

It was in Nigel’s bedroom back in 1979, one sunny afternoon after school, when listening to some of his latest musical acquisitions, that I picked up a copy of Coventry fanzine *Alternative Sounds* I found lying on his bed and began flicking through it. Most of the bands I’d not heard of, some I had, but the point was that here in my hands was not only a bona fide punk fanzine, but one that was also produced right here in Coventry! Not only that, but they were inviting anyone to write reviews, submit photos and letters or interview bands. The realisation that there was both a fanzine and a punk music scene right on my doorstep was, not to put too fine a point on it, a revelation. I found out from Nigel where he had bought his copy and on my way home dropped in and bought a copy of my own – my very first fanzine. It felt like a light switch being turned on.

Pretty soon I was writing the odd review for *Alternative Sounds* and met up with the editor, Martin, whilst we hung around the stage door of Coventry Theatre in the vague hope of interviewing The Stranglers. Not surprisingly, the interview never happened, but they did furnish us with backstage passes, which also got us into the gig for free – another first for me. Could it get any better than this? I had been well and truly bitten by the fanzine bug by this time and was buying fanzines and going to local gigs almost every night, an enthusiastic, if slightly starry eyed, participant in the vibrant local music scene. Before very long I had started up my own fanzine *Adventures in Reality* using the back room of my mother’s house as the centre of operations. Well, I had to really. You just did that sort of thing back then.

That in turn led to my sharing a house with Martin and his partner Julie, two crazy dogs, and eccentric recluse Colin (who used to spend days locked in his bedroom not talking to anyone). It was a chaotic place to live, where no two days were the same and just about anything could, and often did, happen. Previously it had been a Chapter House for Coventry’s wannabe Hells Angel ‘Satan’s Slaves’ and a non stop procession of unsavoury characters regularly used to turn up to visit someone we’d never heard of and ended up sleeping on the sofa or floor. The Police were regular visitors too, usually looking for whoever was sleeping on the sofa or floor that week. They were heady times and they unlocked hitherto hidden depths of creativity in me.

I threw myself into a frenzy of activity: aside from editing *Adventures in Reality*, I also created an ‘agitazine’ called ‘Not The Jobhunter’ with other unemployed kids and blagged a grant from the Queen’s Silver Jubilee Fund to produce it. We immediately started putting out articles highly critical of the Government and local politicians. The irony of the fact that this was funded by Her Majesty was not lost on the local press, who in common with virtually all the national media leaned firmly to the right. They started a campaign to shut us down, but as we gave copies away rather than sold them, there was little they could do to stop us and the attention they inadvertently created meant I got to give interviews to Radio 1 and was filmed for a Channel 4 documentary on the zine (which must have made them even more pissed off).

At the same time I formed a small indie record label (*Adventures in Reality Recordings*) and started putting out music on record and cassette, a mix of local, national and international acts covering electronic (SPK, Test Dept), Anarchist (86 Mix) and things in-between (such as Attrition, who had just featured on one of the early *Bullshit Detector* albums). I also created a slide and film show using found super 8 footage from junk shops, and hundreds of slides I hand made from magazine cuttings and other images of war and performance art, travelling with, and projecting them over, bands as they toured around Europe. I formed a band of my own (Stress) with fellow fanzine writer Phil Clarke and we recorded and released records both on my own label and others, and gigged around the country; and I met and corresponded with no end of interesting and weird people from all over the globe.

Soon after I began an art course at the local university, which gave me access to their photographic dark rooms, screen printing facilities and meant I could book out their cameras to take along with me to gigs to take photos. Most of what I did there revolved around fanzines and bucking the system. They said they wanted us to do an assignment to “show them who we were”, so I printed hundreds of stickers with my face on and plastered them everywhere. When the cleaners found they removed the paint when they tried to peel them off I was ordered by the Principal to stop, but it certainly achieved the objective! For my end of year ‘show’ I found the idea of displaying a set of paintings in a room at the university for other students and tutors to muse over, very boring and conventional, so a week before the show I photocopied collaged artwork onto A3 sheets and spent several hair raising nights fly-posting them in the city’s grotty and crumbling subways in the early hours. I then persuaded some of the tutors to come with me round the city centre looking for any that survived. Most were vandalised or graffitied – which was the whole point. Needless to say, they failed to appreciate the gesture and my final mark reflected that. Not that I cared much.

Eventually I decided to up sticks and move to London (where I still live today), moving into the legendary Ambulance Station squat on the Old Kent Road for a while (complete with gigs every weekend in the ambulance hall downstairs a fully working guillotine in one of the rooms, and regular firebomb attacks by the hostile locals), then on to Walthamstow where I co-ran a mail order record and tape distribution service; expanded my record label; moved house every few months; formed a new band, and met my lifelong partner, Kleo.

Coming back to Coventry fanzines, for a brief period between 1979–1985 a real musical renaissance took place in Coventry, a feat which has, for some reason, not been repeated since. The forty or so fanzines that sprang up spontaneously as part of this scene represented an explosion of creativity and talent that emerged direct from the streets of Coventry, and to my mind was unparalleled in any other city outside of London. Of course there were other provincial cities with their own smattering of fanzines, but nowhere else was there such a variety and sheer quantity of fanzines emanating from the one small geographic area.

I knew many of the other local fanzine editors well, and making a profit running a Coventry fanzine was seen by most of us as being almost impossible, so breaking even was the general aim. For many fanzines it was also a matter of principle that you did not profit personally, resulting in some rather odd cover prices (one early edition of *Adventures in Reality* was priced at 16p – the exact cost of production). However, with such a hand to mouth existence, failing to break even was certainly the most common reason for local fanzines ceasing production, as many of those who produced them were either unemployed, students or still at school. Doing a fanzine was not a business, it was a labour of love. You did it because you cared, because you wanted to be a part of something bigger. Because it mattered.

And because it mattered, that is why *Adventures in Reality* had such a strong affinity to the anarchist punk scene. I wouldn't describe my zine as anarchist punk as it featured a wide range of bands from local pop punksters The Wild Boys, non-racist skinhead bands like Criminal Class, gothic punk acts like Bauhaus, to experimental acts such as Eyeless in Gaza and SPK. However, throughout the time I was producing the zine, I regularly featured anarchist acts such as Flux of Pink Indians, Crass, Discharge, GBH, Poison Girls, Annie Anxiety and others. I was good friend with the editors of local anarchist punk zine Antisocial, edited by then Miles Ratledge and Nick Bullen, who later went on to form the band Napalm Death together. Many of the other local fanzines covered anarchist punk bands too. At that time, almost all the anarchist punks were very young – 13-15 typically. I guess it had a strong appeal to rebellious school kids who felt they were very much victims of the system at that time in their lives, bossed around by parents and teachers and pretty much powerless. Producing a fanzine or forming a bedroom punk band was probably the best way they had available of expressing that as it was affordable and didn't rely on glossy production values or formal distribution networks.

One of the formative moments for the whole local band and fanzine movement was the Crass/Poison Girls/Annie Anxiety/Flux of Pink Indians gig at Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham on 22 April 1981. That had a cathartic effect on everyone from Coventry who was there, inspiring and re-invigorating our DIY roots and spawning many a new band and zine. After that gig I interviewed Flux for my fanzine and regularly featured anarchist bands alongside my usual coverage, started corresponding regularly with anarchist fanzine writers from across the world, and also offered help with getting zines like Fack into local left wing bookshops. I saw no conflict having experimental bands next to anarchist punk bands in my zine. I felt strongly that Crass and Test Department shared the same attitude and Rudimentary Peni and Flux could sit next to Bauhaus quite happily.

At the time I was also using left wing community print shops to print my zine, getting involved in local campaigns and distributing leaflets against animal testing by including them as inserts in the zine. Producing the zine was always a struggle financially. I financed it from issue to issue, but as it was sold worldwide that involved posting it off to far flung destinations (which was expensive as paper is heavy) and having to wait a long time to see any money back, if at all. Most of the money I needed to keep it going came from selling locally in record shops and left wing bookshops and through distribution run by Rough Trade. It was possible then to walk into Virgin Records, Rough Trade or HMV with your fanzine and ask them to sell it and display a poster. They usually only took a small commission, if at all. That's just not possible now. I also used to sell a lot at gigs, or even by going round the local pubs at weekends. In retrospect that was a near suicidal technique, as Coventry pubs in the 1980s were very, very rough and I was a weedy punk on my own and with bright blue sticky-up hair. I survived though.

Occasionally I would put on benefit gigs with local bands to help top up the funds to pay for the next issue, but a slice of my dole money went into it nonetheless. Out of necessity I used whatever means I could to produce the zine. Sometimes that meant using an ancient Gestetner duplicator machine I came across in the corner of a community print shop to run off some flyers for the zine by hand. I used the art school facilities a lot even before I studied there as they had very low/no security so providing I looked like a student (which largely involved wearing a long stripey scarf) and strode in with confidence I could nip into their darkrooms to develop photos, reverse type and screen print at no cost. I wasn't working, so the office photocopier wasn't an option for me personally, but I would ask anyone I knew who worked in an office to run a few copies of posters and flyers for me whenever they could.

These techniques for subverting the means of production was a very punk/anarchist way of doing things. The 'system' was blind to lots of small things like sneaking the odd photocopy, so providing you didn't get carried away you could get away with a lot. Years later we used to flypost for gigs by going out in the rush hour in London and pasting posters onto lamp posts, walls, even inside underground stations. Everyone was too focussed on getting home to bother noticing us and if we spotted a policeman we could easily merge into the crowds of commuters before they saw what we were up to. That was much easier and safer than sneaking around in the dead of night! Hiding in plain sight.

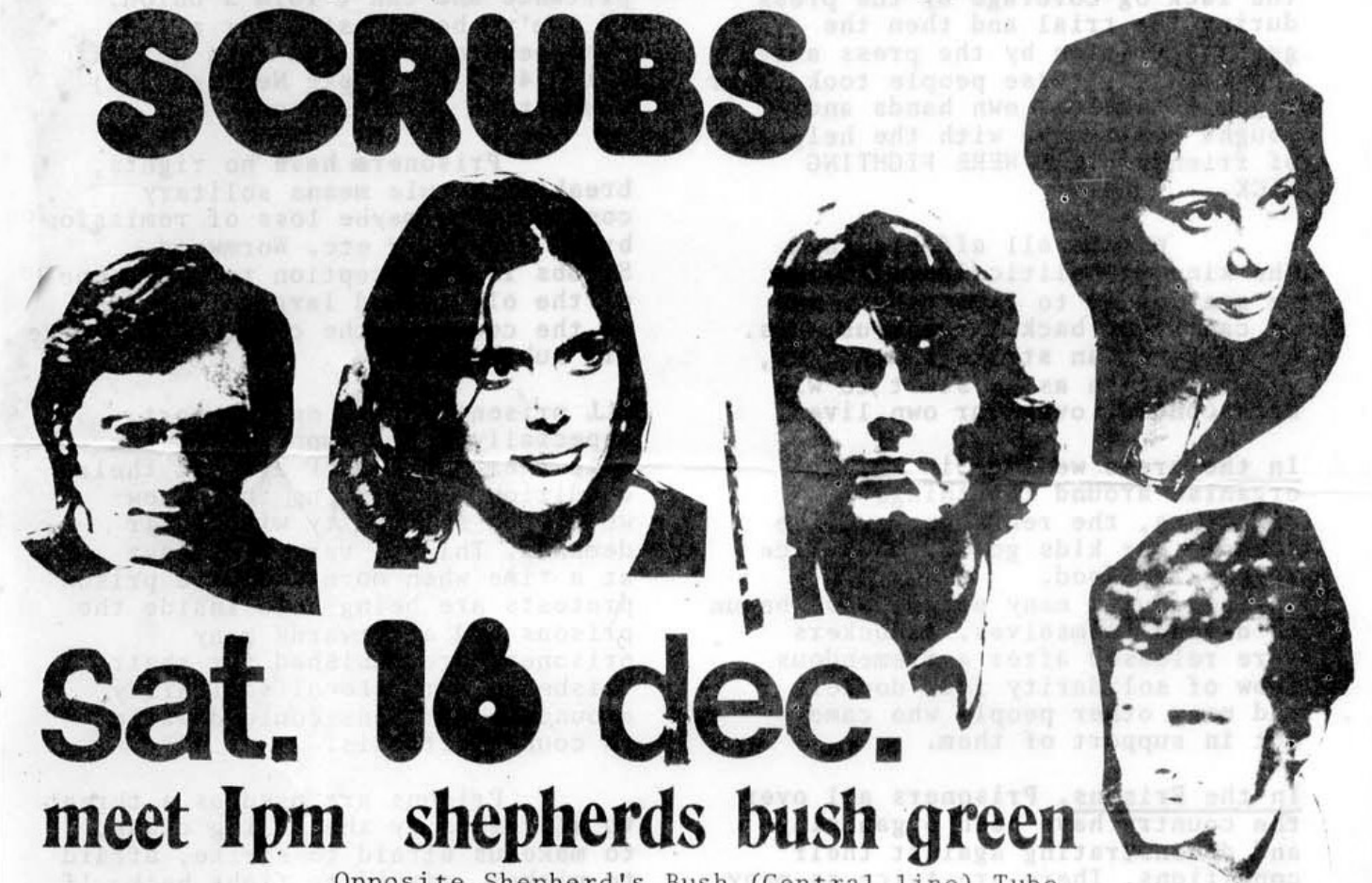
When the more radical elements of anarcho-punk came along, it got harder as they were deliberately confrontational, so it was harder to stay beneath the radar. There was a network of left wing bookshops at the time that was happy to stock fanzines and had a ready made and receptive audience. I also sold through a bizarre collection of sympathetic shops. Some were poster shops selling pop badges and posters, others were punk clothes shops including Kahn and Bells in Birmingham which later became at the forefront of the New Romantic movement, designing clothes for Duran Duran. It was all remarkably tolerant and mutually supportive really, in many ways far more so than now.



Zines were distributed nationally and internationally through a network of other fanzine writers, tape labels and shops. Staal Plaat in Amsterdam was a label and shop that used to stock fanzines. The Cartel (a partnership of indie shops/labels including Red Rhino, Backs and Rough Trade) would distribute nationally and to Rough Trade, San Francisco. US chain Tower Records used to take *Adventures in Reality* to sell in their stores in major cities. Indie distributors like Smart (an offshoot of Birmingham zine Smart Verbal) and Wot also took zines as well as cassette releases. I used to swap zines with other zine producers as a way of getting into more places worldwide and sending review copies helped get the name around. Mainstream music press used to run the occasional fanzine reviews too which generated a few sales. The 80s equivalent of online shops were mail order operations like Cause for Concern and Terminal Kaleidoscope (which I helped run out of a flat in Walthamstow) who would advertise in the back of mainstream music papers like *NME* and *Sounds*. Stalls at gigs were a great way of selling lots of different zines in one place and usually did well. I often used to walk up and down the queue outside a bigger gig (eg Dead Kennedys, Killing Joke) selling zines to people waiting as they hadn't got much else to do and were often there for a while so wanted something to read.

The limitations in the means of production and distribution helped create new networks which quickly declined and disappeared once the internet came along. With the sudden ease of access internationally, there was an equivalent loss of the sense of an underground community and a supportive network of contacts and retailers that fitted very broadly under the punk heading, but actually encompassed everything from experimental noise to anarchist hardcore. As a result musical genres quickly retreated into separate camps catering for niche audiences with far less crossover, which in retrospect is a real shame and a loss of solidarity.

# MARCH ON WORMWOOD SCRUBS



**Sat. 16 dec.**

**meet 1pm shepherds bush green**

Opposite Shepherd's Bush (Central line) Tube.

PUBLIC MEETING afterwards in  
DENBIGH HALL, Denbigh Rd., (off  
Pembroke Rd, Pembroke Cresc. at 6p.m.  
Nearest tube: Notting Hill Gate)

We are demonstrating this weekend against the increasing violence the State uses against us, through the police, the courts and in the prisons.

Last week, 4 people, two men and two women were each sent to prison for 10 years for what the judge described as "the intention of disrupting and attacking the democratic society of this country". 4 other people on trial with them were acquitted. A year ago, Jake Prescott was mugged by Judge Melford-Stephenson for 15 years. The charge against these 5? Conspiracy to cause explosions in the UK during an unspecified space of time over the last three years.

Conspiracy is a vague charge which is difficult to defend. The judge in this case, Justice James said a nod or a wink could constitute a conspiracy. The only effective defence would have been to account for every minute of one's time over the last three years. This was clearly impossible.

## WHOSE CONSPIRACY?

The defendants in this trial knew that the police were lying and that it was the police who had planted the guns and gelignite which were found in Amhurst Road. The amount of contradictory evidence in this case, as in so many others was enormous, and that it was clear from the beginning that the police had gone to so much trouble to gloss over the truth that the trial eventually took 5 months.

## A POLITICAL TRIAL?

This trial was described as a political trial, because the defendants felt all the way along



# SPANISH EMBASSY MACHINE- GUNNED NEWS CUT

## BROTHERS AND SISTERS:

We expect the news of the machine-gunning of the Spanish Embassy in London on Thursday night to be suppressed by the bourgeois Press . . . It's the third time over the last month that the system has dropped the mask of the so-called "freedom of information" and tried to hide the fact of its vulnerability.

"They" know the truth behind the BBC van the day before the Miss World farce.  
"They" know the truth behind the destruction of property of High Court judges.  
"They" know the truth behind the four Barclays Banks which were either burned or badly destroyed. "They" also know that active opposition to their system is spreading.

The Angry Brigade doesn't claim responsibility for everything. We can make ourselves heard in one way or the other. We machine-gunned the Spanish Embassy last night in solidarity with our Basque sisters and brothers. We were careful not to hit the pigs guarding the building as representatives of British capital in fascist Spain. If Britain co-operates with France over this "legal" lynching by shutting the truth away, we will take more careful aim the next time.

SOLIDARITY AND REVOLUTION  
LOVE

Communique, THE ANGRY BRIGADE.  
Friday 4 December 1970



DRAMATIC  
HALF-FACE  
TESTS  
SHOW  
PROOF

"No, It's a Zine, Not a 'Fan' Zine."

"NO, IT'S A ZINE, NOT A 'FAN' ZINE."

Anth Palmer

So it was just myself and a head awash with idealism and the urge to create and express all those thoughts and ideas that were becoming too much to contain. It was just myself sat at a desk, hunched over a cranky second hand typewriter with keys that clanked together as my fingers pounded out the words, the bottle of correction fluid slowly binding itself together that was often used for all the grammatical goofs and the mistakes in punctuation. My typing skills back then seemingly unable to match the speed at which my brain formulated sentences together despite the fact that the main beverage being consumed throughout those days and nights primarily consisted of mixing cans of Special Brew with a bottle of Merrydown, a potent concoction that both dulled the senses yet inspired the creativity. Somehow.

It was just myself, it was the summer of 1988 and I sat at my desk in the Hyde Park area of Leeds, shut away in my room and away from the others in our all vegan, anarchist household. After a few false starts, it was finally coming together. I was embarking on putting together and publishing my first zine.

But let's back up a little.

Back in 1984, the year that was synonymous with Orwell's bleak predictions he aptly spoke of in his novel and the year Crass stated would be their demise. That specific year would be my first introduction to the now long standing tradition of being approached by someone at a gig; a pint in one hand and a carrier bag in the other and with the conversation beginning with the ubiquitous line of "You wanna buy a zine?" and for said zine then being thrust your way so you can have a moment or two to read over the contents displayed on the cover. This particular ground breaking event took place at the Leeds Bierkeller, the city centre venue that hosted punk gigs seemingly every other night of the week during the early to mid eighties. I attended as many as was financially possible during that period, well as much as my weekly allowance would stretch to.

On this occasion it was one of the many all day gigs that Nick Toczec promoted, it may well have been the all day gig which Black Flag headlined (a life changing event) and whilst my long term memory is eluding in that respect I'm still able to distinctly recall that the first ever zine I bought was *Raising Hell*, No.4. The cover price stated 10p and back then 10p could possibly buy you a single cigarette from the local corner shop. That zine in all its cut and paste chaotic stylistic glory, with its pages falling away from the staples and so poorly zeroxed making it largely unreadable in places was the revelation and the catalyst for eventually instilling enough candour and faith in myself to say a few years later "Yeah, I can do that." The adage of the Do It Yourself ethic that had been firmly embraced by punk.

So on that particular day Ben aka Sik 'o' War got 10p of my money, I bought my first zine, the corner shop lost out to selling me a single smoke and the world (OK, some of it) eventually got to peruse over the subsequent two zines that I published from 1988 until 1999 and then a third title from 2010 onwards.



From that moment on led to me being completely consumed with connecting to others. Punk wasn’t about living in isolation (as I felt the time), it became by reading the reviews Ben wrote of other zines which led to me habitually sellotaping coins to bits of cardboard and writing off to them. Those zines would eventually arrive through the mail accompanied by bits of paper advertising other individual zines. The zine buying domino effect had begun. Fortunately, I soon became savvy with ways in which to curtail my excessive postal costs by becoming wise to soaping the stamps on every SAE and my letters to zine publishers (or anything else purchased through the mail) ending with the mandatory “Can you return my stamp” postscript. Soaping stamps, is this now a defunct cost cutting exercise in our cyber, digital age?

Other notable titles that come to mind which proved to be an inspiration from that era would include; *Infection*, *Problem Child*, *Headrot*, *Dregs*, *Artcore*, *Nuclear Sunrise* and *Phoenix Militia*. Each of those, in fact all zines past and present had and have their own identity and their own agendas, forged from the publisher/writers aim to express their viewpoints on any given topic they feel is worth portraying and with the notion that it is somehow worth reading and appreciated by others.

#### ***Dingo Baby* – seven issues, 1988 to 1992**

So named after the worldwide news story following the death of Azaria Chamberlain, the Australian baby girl who was killed by a Dingo whilst on a family camping trip to Ayers Rock. Her mother, Lindy Chamberlain was tried for murder and spent more than three years in prison until finally being released when a piece of Azaria’s clothing was found near a Dingo lair which saw new inquests opened and the parents’ version of events being officially confirmed by a coroner.

Whilst still heavily involved as a activist (sabotaging fox hunts with a hangover anyone?, clearing nazis away from selling their propaganda on the streets of the city centre, numerous run-ins with the old bill, etc., etc....) I had little interest in using *Dingo Baby* as a platform to espouse the political ethics I held, more so the opportunity to vent the personal experiences that had plagued my life thus far; isolation, frustration, loss, love, regret, alienation, anger and at times, utter emotional exhaustion. *Dingo Baby* could just have become a zine that heralded one other passion I held at the time; skateboarding, but the zine *Skate Muties from the 5<sup>th</sup> Dimension* managed to cover that subject far, far better with its no holds barred approach, rampant humour and an overall ‘Fuck You’ attitude. Anyway, I had the anarcho crust band I was a member of and there was plenty of sloganeering and vehemence of disdain within the band as a collective and as individuals, which allowed us to wax lyrical throughout that existence.

I was just another product of Thatcher’s broken Britain that continued to bring untold misery to many and unjust millions of self serving wealth to all those greedy bastards who took gleeful advantage of the situation at the time. In hindsight, the first three issues of *Dingo Baby* were relatively average in content and contained much of what you would often find in any other zine: interviews, reviews, articles, opinions and a vague attempt to personalise some of the demons that had cast their dark shadows on myself with their continual haunting presence during prior bleak times.

Interviewing bands was, and unfortunately still is, the general rule of thumb in some areas of zine publishing. Sure, I can claim fame to being the first UK zine to interview Fugazi and I only know that because Guy Piccioto told me (shame I no longer have that copy of their first demo cassette he mailed over as perhaps some chumps would be bidding hard if I was in a position to list it on that well known internet auction site). But being in a band does not make you more self important despite how many records you’ve sold, nor does it put you on a pedestal, despite that often happening anyway. Having bands listed on the front cover can help sales and whilst I wasn’t naïve enough to think otherwise, I decided to interview other zine writers too (as I continued to with my next zine). Everyone has an opinion and a story to tell. Interviewing some down and out sat collapsed at the bar would probably prove to be more interesting than the same fucking band that is featured endlessly in every other zine.

In issue four I made the conscience decision to interview a band who I shared similar ideological and ethical stances with but simultaneously found other aspects of the lyrical viewpoints and moral judgements to be completely abhorrent. The band being Statement who had self released a plethora of demo cassettes throughout the mid to late eighties and had close links with The Apostles having shared vinyl output. Statement had always voiced strong militant direct action against any form of animal abuse and I’d regularly corresponded with Rat, the sole person responsible for everything connected with the band.

Then along came the band Vegan Reich and the ideology of the Hardline movement, a subculture that extended on and beyond the basic tenets of the straight edge philosophy. This new school of thought took the drug free lifestyle to another level and declared the sanctity of all innocent life be it human or animal, promoted direct action and protection against any form of harm towards the ecology and the environment, all out war on companies involved in the meat industry not mention adhering to a strict vegan dietary regime. Upholding the respect of all innocent life included an anti abortion stance and a seemingly homophobic approach to human rights with homosexuality judged as an anathema given that sex could only be justified for the sole purpose of procreation. It was therefore interesting to see the Statement Prepare for Battle EP released on Hardline records which prompted the interview to be undertaken.

Interviewing Statement may have been seen as a controversial move, but then there are only so many ‘safe’ band interviews you can read through that offer little more than back slapping kudos and having them recite over and over what their influences are and which neither challenge who or what defines the actual make-up of those individuals answering the questions. There was plenty I didn’t agree with from the answers Rat gave but I had no qualms in giving him the space to uphold his opinions on the fanatical and confrontational views he voiced in supporting the then Hardline ethos.

Unsurprisingly, interviewing a Hardline affiliated band was met with a flurry of responses that came through the mail. Not that I considered it to be some anti-*Dingo Baby* backlash but many were not impressed either with the interview itself or why



I had chosen to conduct and print the interview at all. In subsequent issues of the zine I published a tiny fraction of letters received regarding the interview, some were supportive, others weren’t, many were vitriolic of both Rat/Statement/Hardline and some spoke highly of his willingness to speak honestly of the beliefs that he held. Whilst putting together the seventh (and final issue) I had seriously had enough and felt that *Dingo Baby* had now become hijacked and associated with just one particular band interview. Whilst it managed to initially provide discussion (and argument), I felt it was the nail in the proverbial coffin as far as my zine was concerned.

The writing I published throughout issues four, five and six had become increasingly pessimistic and misanthropic. It wasn’t so much of a cathartic process that attempted to describe my state of mind or the environmental factors being experienced, it was just the overwhelming sensation of being well and truly burnt out. The final issue of *Dingo Baby* bowed out with pages dedicated to the pro-choice standpoint of abortion rights, the individual’s choices and opinions on living a drug and alcohol free lifestyle, certain sardonic and sarcastic essays on how I viewed the current hardcore punk movement and an overall firm decision that the new zine I had already begun working on would be far different and far removed from its predecessor. Between the old and the new there was much transitional phases to pass through. The new zine incorporated some of the similar facets and content of the one previous but I was determined to take the next zine on a new direction.

Within my personal life there were considerable changes such as finishing my fourth year as a graduate in graphic design, relocating back to Leeds from my studies in the North East and most harrowing watching helplessly as my then girlfriend sank into abject hopelessness and deterioration that culminated with her eventual detainment under the Mental Health Act due to a drug induced psychosis. Attempting to put all that into some resemblance of normality proved to be a complete ongoing charade of mental confusion, fear and the avalanche of seeking to try and understand and regain control of each and every situation that became evident every other day.

It also seemed that the anarchist-punk-squatting demographic in Leeds had changed, changed to the extent that it had somewhat disappeared from what it had been over recent years. People had moved on. Moved on for the better or just moved on with disillusionment. What I had once held onto as being the whole and centre of the universe now no longer seemed to exist.

#### ***Duhhh* – ten issues, 1993 to 1999**

*Dingo Baby* had ceased to exist with a much flippant eulogy of that time and *Duhhh* initially continued on the same path for the first few issues. I wrote of the current times I was going through much of what seemed to be a continual contempt of life. Re-reading those earlier copies has had me wonder now what the fuck I had to piss and moan about. My own writing that featured in those first few issues fluctuated between a new contempt of the human race I appeared to have succumbed to whilst paradoxically documenting topics that other hardcore punk zines didn’t feature or cover. It was remarkably simple and straight forward to churn out long winded and angry missives about an absentee landlord who refused to take responsibility for the repairs that needed taking care of in one particular

rented property I found myself residing in. Just have another listen to the Dead Kennedys’ song ‘Let’s Lynch the Landlord’ for proof of what those soul sucking, money grabbing assholes are like. But then, for a couple of issues I enlisted a new writer/contributor by the name of Ms Linda who offered her advice on various matters relating to sex. For me, it didn’t seem out of place to publish her lengthy and informative articles regarding which were the best sex toys and erotic lingerie to purchase only for it to be followed by an interview with the band Voorhees. Ms Linda had no connection to the hardcore punk movement whatsoever and her knowledge of it barely went further than vaguely knowing who the Sex Pistols were. Why she chose Ms Linda as a pseudonym never became apparent, she was actually called Cath and was a Staff Nurse who worked on an orthopedic ward at one of the local hospitals.

I was still intrigued with wanting to find out why others published their own zines so throughout four of the earlier issues I decided to ask by continuing what I’d featured briefly in *Dingo Baby* and interviewed a number of individuals who had probably asked themselves the same question. It transpired that pretty much all of them replied with the same or similar answer; with wanting to express and create something that they hoped others would appreciate and enjoy reading. I could have interviewed other zine writers but the ones chosen included: Duncan (*Dregs*), Andy C (*Dark Diamonds*), Russ (*Charred Remains*), The Rev’ Randall Tin-Ear (*Angry Thoreauan*), Andy Shocker (*Punk Shocker*), Nick Sims (*Increasingly Right Wing*) and Tomaz (*Papermouth*). On their own merits, every one of those zines and the person responsible had somehow made an impact and were innovative in establishing their own zine’s identity.

The interview with Nick Sims was, and still is one of my favourite interviews conducted. Not so much by the sheer volume of his answers to the questions I put to him (when asked how his day had been, his response went into miniscule detail of every single occurrence and incident which included a lengthy and hilarious narrative of the family argument over the breakfast table that particular morning). Naming your zine *Increasingly Right Wing* was hardly something you would chose lightly, not that it would have bothered Nick, his writing was often provocative and close to the knuckle, he was far from being right wing and just didn’t really give a fuck about upholding any political credibility. As Duncan (*Dregs* zine) stated when I interviewed him in *Duhhh* No.2 and when asked if he had at any time come close to self censorship, replied that publishing Nick’s review of a Skrewdriver gig had been close to the mark but he published the piece anyway.

Nick was also prone to doing things ad-hoc and on the spur of the moment. He hitched from London to Leeds one day with the intention of us meeting up. Unfortunately he wrongly assumed, just as many had done in the past, that the mailing address of 52 Call Lane, Leeds was some well established punk squat where everyone lived and communed together. 52 Call Lane was in fact home to the left wing *Leeds Other Paper* and home to a multitude of mailing box numbers that many of us (bands, zines, political organisations et al) had at that address. Individuals turning up assuming the same was a long standing tradition and was always met with mirth from the actual workers of the newspaper who would respond by saying



“No, Chumbawamba don’t live here.”

So upon falling foul of the same scenario having spent six or so hours en route north to discover I wasn’t there and never one to lose out on any opportunity, Nick managed to make new friends with a bunch of homeless guys who were spare changing outside one of the markets, bought enough white cider for the whole dishevelled ensemble to get absolutely rinsed on and somehow managed to catch the last bus heading south at midnight.

I returned home from work that evening and listened as he relayed his mishap on the answering machine. It was pretty incoherent and slurred at best.

Issue three proved to be somewhat of a pivotal turning point as I had by then decided that every subsequent issue would now have a theme. More writers had begun offering to contribute so it made sense to give others the opportunity to vent their opinions or stories, plus it meant I didn’t feel so overwhelmed with attempting to write everything myself and could also focus more on the visual aesthetics and design of the zine. It was just another way of having *Duhhh* establish it’s own identity. Interviewing other zine publishers had now fallen by the wayside as interviewing bands became more prevalent. The balance between those, the contributors’ pieces and my continual streams of consciousness appeared to strike the balance of how I wanted the zine to be. So between issue three and all the way through to the final edition we managed to cover; rebellion, drugs and alcohol, sex, the meaning of life, hedonism, romance and love, humiliation and embarrassment.

Issue nine, ‘The Romance Issue’ still stands as the overall winner and the one I’m still most proud of as it captured precisely everything I wanted the zine to be. ‘The Sex Issue’ may have been a contender as well. Sex and romance seemed intrinsically taboo subjects that were rarely covered within the hardcore punk remit. Strange, given that both sex and romance are cornerstones of the human psyche that we all partake in.

Just as with all of the themes, each one had the contributors submitting either a positive or negative response that they spoke of from personal experience(s).

No doubt the most poignant romance submission came from one of the regular writers who stated “*HI Anth, here’s my piece for the romance issue.....*” The remaining A4 piece of paper being completely blank. I printed it as exactly that. It was one of those occasions where I guess no words whatsoever could make more of an impression than a few hundred words ever could.

The Californian power-violence band Man Is The Bastard were another inadvertent inspiration. They were an inspiration not only due to their name, their aural onslaught and through their sheer brutality on a lyrical level but also due to the fact they released endless split LPs and EPs with other bands. So it seemed perfectly natural for *Duhhh* to do the same by co-publishing a number of split zines. It began with issue three being a split edition with Bunker whose editor (and long term contributor to *Duhhh*) was far more out to lunch with his resolute hatred of the human race. Bunker sadly only lasted a mere two issues in all. A few years later I financed and distributed a follow up zine of his entitled *Peepshow* that clearly bordered on overstepping the boundaries of good taste.

*Duhhh* No.5 was a split with *Shag Stamp*, a zine that found it’s feet via the Riot Grrl movement and still remains one of my favourite all time publications. That collaboration led to a long term relationship between myself and the editor Jane. Evolving through female focused politics that eventually led to a career in the stripping industry saw Jane develop her zine’s own natural progression that laid bare the trappings women were expected to adhere to in searching for their own place and identity, not only in society as a whole but within the oft political correctness of punk itself. A riot grrl taking her clothes off for money?? How dare she....

Two issues later came the split with Charred Remains zine and whilst myself and the zine’s other writers tackled the subject of hedonism, Russ Remains titled his side as ‘The Sex Issue’ which pretty much covered all the lewd debauchery most people have rattling around in their head but are generally far too hung up about to actually discuss openly. The final issue of *Duhhh* arrived in the summer of 1999, two months prior to myself and Jane moving to Denmark. It seemed befitting for it to be a split with *Smitten* zine whose dual authors Hilary and Jayne were then (and still are now) two of my favourite friends I’ve come to know.

Although I continued to write and contribute to other zines and periodicals for the next few years it wouldn’t be until 2010 whereupon I resumed writing and publishing again. I occasionally ponder and ask myself if the zine culture associated with hardcore punk is somehow now dead compared to how it once was. As someone who rarely attends hardcore gigs I’m probably not in a position to question whether those gigs have a comparable feature of days gone past with zine editors attempting the hard sell. I can only think of a mere handful of zine titles that still exist now as they also did back in the nineties (or eighties for that matter). Obviously new zines will have come (and maybe gone). It would also be far to cynical to assume that the internet has killed off the printed word despite the ever increasing deluge of online zines and blogs.

Will I ever entertain the notion of creating an online zine? Fuck no, not at all. Zines are tactile, are made to be held in one’s hands and read and certainly not by staring into the abyss of a computer screen. *Dingo Baby* served its purpose. The driving force behind *Duhhh* was essentially about having a good time because let’s face it, there’s generally enough shit times we are sometimes/often/always faced to deal with. In 2010 I began publishing *Go Fuck Yourself*, which solely exists to document the highs and lows, the mishaps and the adventures attributed to my travels around the globe.

So why do we write and self publish? For all the reasons given and then some. And to stop us all from going fucking nuts I guess.



# FIGHT TO LIVE.

MOLESWORTH, 8th APRIL 85.

(A)

On April 8th CND had their national demonstration at Molesworth cruise missile base. It was well attended with over 20,000 people there including several thousand anarchists. There was a good anti-CND feeling, many people angered by the way the CND bureaucrats had worked with the police deciding where people could and couldn't go, and with the instruction given to stewards telling them to report to the police any one seen doing anything "untoward".

Despite this and the intermittent rain as soon as the encircling of the base started we were able to attack the fence and the police behind it. Many groups from all over the country attacked the fence, pulling out posts and cutting the razor wire. At several times the filth on the inside of the fence were subjected to barrages of bricks, bottles, lumps of wood and handfulls of mud. One pig was knocked unconscious and taken to hospital after one of these missiles made contact with his head.

On top of this Joan Ruddock, chairperson of CND and prizewinner, was given the reception she deserved when she turned up at the base to give interviews and have her photo taken. While she was being interviewed she was constantly interrupted by shouts of protest etc, and she had mud thrown in her face.....next time she won't get off so lightly.

There was a large anarchist presence at Molesworth, we done a lot of damage, if we had been more organised there's no telling what we could have achieved....next time we'll be ready! The class war has begun...which side are you on?!

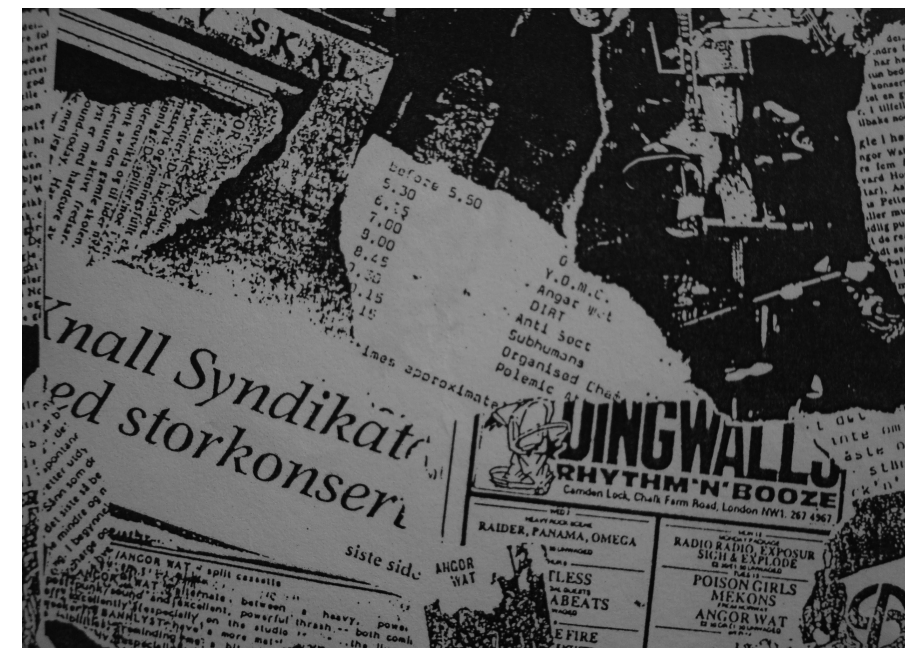
**Anarchist mob  
violence hits  
Molesworth  
Cruise demo**

A MOB of anarchists started fires and threw stones as they battled with police at the Molesworth CND demonstration yesterday.  
DAILY MAIL  
9/4/85

Punk in Norway

## PUNK IN NORWAY

Viggo Mastad



The post office at 7240 Fillan, on the Island of Hitra was in the house next to ours. Not even 200 meters away, which is pretty close considering the distance between houses in coastal Norway during the late the 70s. The office was run by a woman called Ågot. It was not a common name then, and it certainly isn't now. She lived in the very same house with her dog (possibly a golden retriever), husband (possibly an electrician), daughter and two sons. There was literally just a wall separating the post office and her living room. Ågot, however, wisely enough, preferred to keep her professional and private lives as far apart as possible under the circumstances. And that exactly was the problem. The very thought that inside the post office might be a package with my name on it, from Small Wonder Records in Walthamstow, London, with vinyl records inside it, but still out of my reach since the notice of its arrival would not be in our postbox until the following day, was hard to live with. When expecting such a delivery I sometimes could not resist calling after closing hours to ask Ågot - being her neighbour and all - if she could have a look. Had the package from England finally arrived? The answer was always the same - "Wait until tomorrow." So, no albums for me. No *Crossing the Red Sea*. And certainly no *Another Music in a Different Kitchen*.

How did a 13 or 14 year old kid from Norway come to use the money made from his first ever job to buy punk rock records? Well, there's a long version and a short one, I suppose. The short one would go something like this: if you asked any punk rocker from the county of Trøndelag in the late 70s what first got them into punk rock, there might very well be a mention of Mr Casino Steel. Casino who? Yes, Casino Steel, keyboard player of UK punk band The Boys and, more importantly, columnist for our local newspaper reporting from London where he lived at the time and experienced the punk revolution as it happened. Originally from Trondheim, he



came to be 'our man in London', and for some reason it soon became evident that Kiss, Deep Purple, Nazareth, Pink Floyd and even Uriah Heep had suddenly lost all relevance. Even if the same was not necessarily true for Abba and Sparks, it was clear that punk rock was the only thing worth listening to, and in my opinion it was a total departure from anything else in the world of music. All new and happening right now. In England. The only problem was I hadn't heard a single song yet.



Angor Wat in Camden (Arne Svalastog)

All of that was about to change. And it was no coincidence that Norwegian kids turned their attention to England in those days. Most of us already had a strong connection to the UK. Not because of the war, or the royal families, or the Beatles. No, this was all down to tippekampen; the simple fact that every Saturday at 1600 hours local time, Norwegian state television (there was only one channel back then), would broadcast a football match from England. So, we were in no way strangers to places like Huddersfield, Hull, Newcastle, Bristol, Cardiff or Liverpool, or Highbury, Maine Road and Molineux. The tiny, little local bookshop also sold the football magazine *Shoot!* and the kiosk on the corner traded football cards with English players, of which I was already a keen little collector. There were no such cards with Norwegian, German, Italian or Spanish players on them. It was all about England and it was up to every young Norwegian man to make his choice. An important choice, possibly for life: which English football club to support. After a difficult period with a series of brief relationships I made my choice a day in March 1974. It must have been on a Monday.

The local newspaper reported that during the weekend Leeds had been beaten. Badly. They had lost 1-4. Not that I had anything against Leeds, but somehow I felt that we would never be more than 'just friends'. And since Leeds were top of the table, any team that could beat them by four goals to one seemed worth supporting. A team for the future, or I so I would think. A team in claret and blue. Not West Ham or Aston Villa. But Burnley. Since that day in 1974 I had a strong personal bond to

Burnley and Burnley FC. I soon came to realise that as a Burnley supporter you will sometimes walk alone, and the passion for music took precedence over the passion for football throughout the 80s and 90s. The interest in Burnley was renewed when they made it back to the top division, and my eldest daughter became a supporter too. It wasn't until then I discovered that Burnley had more to offer than the Clarets. Chumbawamba, who I saw, visited and interviewed in 1986 actually had their roots there. So 25 years later, when thanks to Boff of Chumbawamba, I visited Burnley for the first time and the Clarets entered Turf Moor to the sound of *Tubthumping* it was all pretty much full circle.



Angor Wat at Meanwhile Gardens (Arne Svalastog)

How then did I finally come to hear the music that I heard so much about and already knew that I loved? First of all I managed to find a show called 'Street Heat' on Radio Luxemburg that featured punk and new wave from the very beginning. On a good night, when the reception was decent you could actually hear the music and the interviews, and I'd record them on a cassette player to be able to hear it all over again. Now and again I also had to go to the nearest city, Trondheim, to see the dentist to have my braces tightened. Since the boat to Trondheim left early in the morning and returned late in the afternoon I'd have plenty of time to explore the city, and its record shops. Play Time, where The Three Lions football pub is located today, was by far the best one and I could spend the day listening to Siouxsie and the Banshees, Ultravox, The Jam, and what not. On the wall might also be a poster announcing the next Hard Rock Kafé-gig, a local rock club that hosted all-ages shows with local bands at different venues in Trondheim. It remains a mystery how I persuaded my mother to allow me to go to Trondheim to see a concert where the headliner might very well have been Sjølmord (Suicide). But I did go, with or without permission.

I did not know anyone in Trondheim at the time, but it didn't matter. I was there when the doors opened, and even if I probably had to leave before they closed I had seen the likes of Wannskrækk, Johnny Yen Bang!, Edge and Tomsingan. I was



convinced. This was something that I wanted to be part of, one way or another. That way became apparent pretty fast. It was at one of the HRK-gigs that I first saw a guy selling a magazine called *City Rockers*. Instinctively I knew that I had to buy it. I had no idea what it was, but a fanzine, it turned out, was a magazine written for and by the fans, certainly for me, which also meant it could be written by me. It didn't take long until I was that guy standing there, selling a fanzine. It was called *Punktum* (Norwegian for punctuation mark), with a few concert and record reviews, and a transcript of an interview with Jimmy Pursey on Radio Lux. Some of it was handwritten, some of it written on a typewriter, the headlines made with Letraset. On the front cover was a review of Penetration's *Moving Targets*, based on what I had heard on *Street Heat*. I still haven't heard that album in its entirety, but I did see Penetration at Rebellion 40 years later. People seemed to like them. It's always good for a band to have an audience.

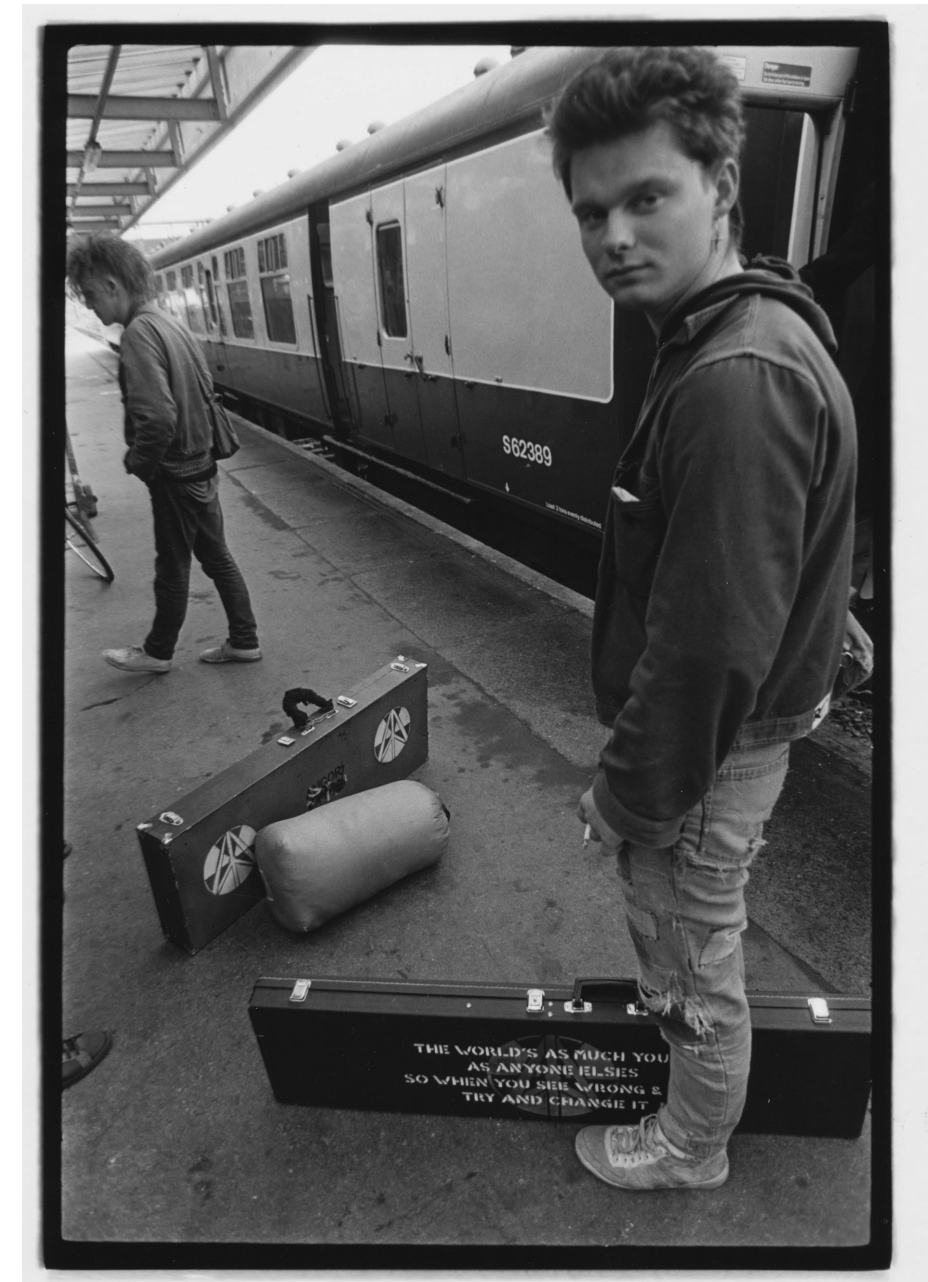


Angor Wat at Meanwhile Gardens (Arne Svalastog)

The first issue of *Punktum* was printed in 100 copies. I had managed to find the address of a print shop in Bodø and they were kind enough to send me their price list. The lowest number of copies on that list was 500. Since I wanted to make 100 it seemed obvious to me that the cost would be the price of 500 divided by 5. Unfortunately the print shop did not see things that way, so when the bill came I quickly realised that I had a major financial problem on my hands. I wrote an angry letter making it clear how unacceptable it was to charge such a ridiculous amount of money. Looking back on it, it might seem as a surprise that they accepted my complaint, even though I took it for granted back then. But the price was adjusted according to my demands and I agreed to modify my language in future communications.

*Punktum* came in 3 issues and I made another few fanzines after that before moving to Trondheim for good in '81 or '82. In the meantime I had done my first year in secondary school at a gymnasium on the Norwegian countryside. This is also where a few mates and I formed our first ever band. I was by no means a musician, but had picked up the guitar along the way. Two of the other guys actually did

play instruments, one of them even knew the title song to Derrick on the piano, which was a pretty impressive thing to play. We did a Ramones-song or two, and probably 'Borstal Breakout'. Our signature song however, could be heard by cows, pigs, farmers and a few terrified teenagers far out on the Norwegian countryside. That song, by Chelsea, was also the name of our band, and goes something like this: *Urban kids, escape!*



Angor Wat on tour (Arne Svalastog)

In '82 or '83 I ended up writing a concert review for a Norwegian music paper about a band called Angor Wat. They were playing a gig at the art centre in Trondheim and named it 'Organised Terror', with the walls decorated with barbed wire (stolen from the railroad station) and graffiti style artwork turning it into some kind of concept-gig. In those days Trondheim was generally regarded as the best Norwegian town for alternative music. With its 130,000 inhabitants the town was big enough to allow



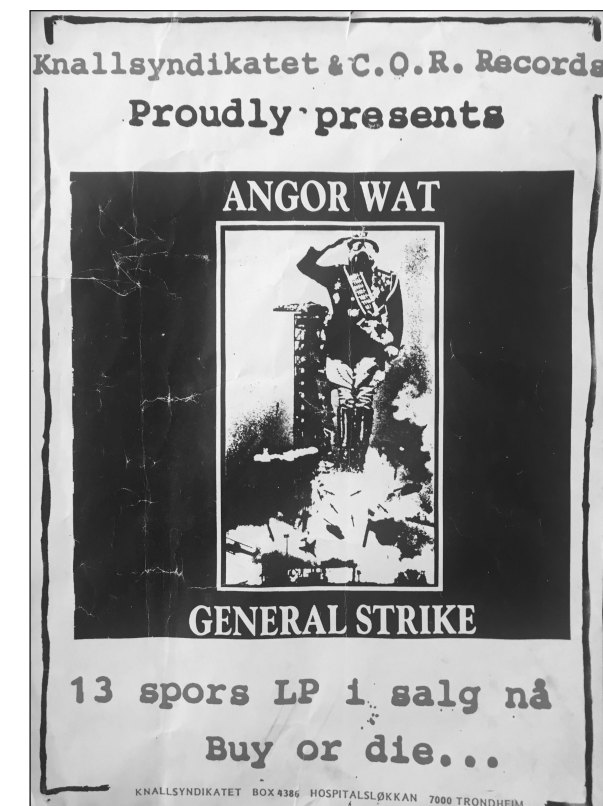
space for new ideas, and small enough to keep different scenes more or less united. The next city, Oslo, was 500 km south, and to the north there was ... well, The North. Angor Wat came out as the first and maybe only Norwegian band directly fitting into the Crass-style of things. Even if the musical influences could easily have come from Discharge or Killing Joke, it was obvious that the Crass imagery had made quite an impression on this bunch of middle class kids from the eastern suburbs of Trondheim. Angor Wat had also released a cassette on their own label, Knalltapes, they made the fanzine Knall, which was one of the leading Norwegian punk fanzines in those days. They also organised gigs with other bands and even had a radio show at a local station. This all came together as The Knall Syndicate, and there were no clear borders between the band, the fanzine and the label.



Election day protest (Håvard Houen)

Like the UK, Norway also had its 1st generation of punk bands. The awesome Kjött, De Press or The Aller Værste!. Brilliant bands by any standard, sounding fresh, diverse and original. Like the 1st generation of UK bands, most of them were signed to major labels; they actually had people working for them, taking care of distribution, promotion, touring and even access to the media. By the early 80s, the major labels were very unlikely to sign a new punk band and the bands' attitudes towards the music business had gone from reluctantly playing along to hostile. Being signed to a major label was out of the question and the independent scene was growing. In Norway this led to the "cassette wave" with lots of bands releasing their music on cassettes only. There was a strong connection between the cassette-scene and the fanzines, and many of the labels were linked to autonomous youth centres. In Trondheim a house was squatted in the centre of the town in '81. After a fire and negotiations with the city council, a new house was soon up and running, this time in an old kindergarten in the central east of the town. UFFA became the place to go for anyone into alternative music, arts or politics; hippies left over from the late 60s, punks from working class backgrounds, middle class kids looking for life outside the box, lost kids looking for a box to fit into, people from the north of Norway trying to find their way south.

The house had a rehearsal room, a bookshop, a café, a small concert hall, and soon also a small studio. Similar scenes were found in other Norwegian towns too, with the biggest one at the Blitz house in Oslo. Whilst the scene in Trondheim always was peaceful and with little or no confrontation with the authorities, the climate in Oslo grew much harder. Repeated squattings followed by evictions led to ever more violent confrontations with the police, and political protests and demonstrations were happening on a scale we have not seen for the last 20 years. On top of this came a growing neo-Nazi scene and violent confrontations between Blitz-people, including SHARP-skins, and the far right extremists. The 80s were turbulent times in Oslo, but the cultural scene and the punk scene was thriving. Blitz saw great bands like Kafka Prosess, So Much Hate, Stengte Dører and Life... But How To Live It? With amazing vocalists like Gunnar Nuven and Katja Osvold, often backed by band members who had come from small places around Norway, and used to play in bands like Bannlyst or Barn Av Regnbuen, to become key figures in the Norwegian and continental European punk scene.



It was in this context Angor Wat had emerged. I already knew the guys in the band from gigs and a common interest in fanzines, and it would be fair to assume that we had already discussed the 'Bloody Revolutions'/'Persons Unknown' single on more than one occasion. I think I first read about Crass in *City Rockers*, and quickly knew that this was the next step for me. Less compromise. More anarchy. That record inspired me like no other, although *Inflammable Material* might have broken the ground only a few months earlier. That punk was a riot in some respect was obvious all along, but until then I didn't see it as a riot with any clear purpose, maybe other than being an alternative to whatever was going on in the music business in the late 70s. When SLF came along we were already very much aware of the conflict in Northern Ireland, and even if this was something that in no way touched on our day



to day life, here was a band expressing a universal spirit and edge, and at the same time relating to the community they lived in. I loved that album, I knew the lyrics by heart, and SLF were probably the first band I could truly grasp as 'political'.

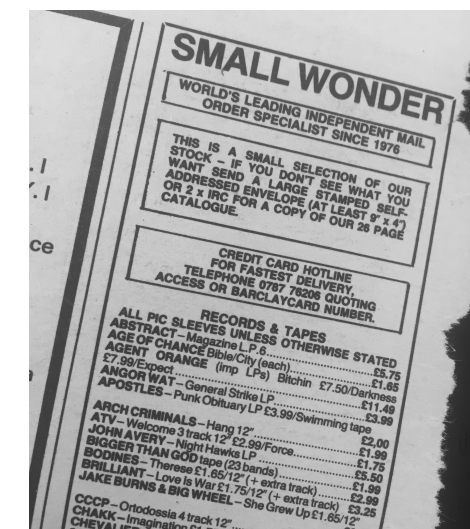


I have to admit that to this day I am not sure what The Trident in Bangor is. It seems fair to assume that Bangor is a place, apparently within walking distance to the city, in this case probably Belfast. It still remains a mystery though. Feel free to enlighten me. There was no way I was going to learn the lyrics to 'Persons Unknown' by heart, or understand the full depth of the lyrics. Still, this one-riff anthem was the introduction to a band that would mean a lot to us only a few years later. 'Bloody Revolutions', however, really made the difference. The explicit political lyrics, the combination of male and female vocals, the song starting off in one place, and developing into something completely different. And the sound of a band that really sounded like nothing else. And it didn't stop there. I could go on about the artwork, the idea of a split-single, but I guess you've all been there and know exactly what I am talking about. This was next level punk, and anarchy was not something you could only read about in old books by Emma Goldman and Bakunin. Not anymore. It was alive here, now, in an exotic place called Epping! This was very clear both to me and to the guys in Angor Wat, and I guess I felt an instant connection to what Angor Wat were doing. A few weeks after I wrote about their gig at the art centre they paid me a visit and asked if I would like to join the band as second guitarist. There was never any doubt as to what my answer would be. My punk journey had taken a new twist.

Joining Angor Wat also meant joining the Knall Syndicate, writing for the fanzine, working with the cassettes, the distribution and the radio. It also meant being politically aware and active, which in those days could mean doing voluntary work

at UFFA, playing benefit gigs, doing graffiti, going to demos, raiding shops to remove South-African products from the shelves (protesting against the apartheid regime). Creative as we were Angor Wat also decided to do a "tour" at election sites on election day in 1985, encouraging voters not to vote, since we regarded voting for any party as a way of supporting The System. Needless to say our mini-tour was not popular with the responsible authorities, and we probably only managed to play half a song before having to leave the premises before the cops arrived.

In cooperation with Ivar Matlaus Bokcafé at UFFA we were soon connected with likeminded people all over the world and had an extensive correspondence, soaped stamps included (even if beeswax or simply transparent tape was our preferred method). One day a letter landed in our post-box at Hospitalsløkkan, from Tim of Children of the Revolution Records in Bristol. He had heard the split cassette we did with Bannlyst and wanted to release records with both bands. This was before Bannlyst moved to Oslo, and still lived in a village called Molde. This did not keep them from playing excellent hardcore, and compared to us they were great musicians already, with guitarist Børre becoming maybe the most influential punk musician in the scene. Tim's original idea was to release the songs from the tape, but we immediately wanted to make new songs with English lyrics. If we were to release a record in England it had to be in English. Not that it would have mattered.



To an English listener, Norwegian lyrics might sound more interesting than Norwegians trying to write and sing in English. We did not see it that way. Since the split tape with Bannlyst our singer Erik had also moved to Oslo, for reasons unknown. One theory was that he was running from the military police. In those days one year of military service was mandatory in Norway. Most of us managed to get away from it entirely or do 'civil service', the state alternative for pacifists. Erik did not. So we had to reshape the band. The bass player, Håvard, started singing, the other guitarist, Assert, took over the bass and the drummer, Jens-Petter, and myself continued as we'd always done. The original idea was to release a 7" single, but somewhere along the way Tim decided it had to be a 12" instead. The new songs were recorded on a 4-track porta-player at UFFA, and mixed in the drummer's bedroom in our flat in Gregus street 8. A few months later General Strike was to be found in The Small



Wonder ad in NME, and with that my professional goals were more or less achieved. The sound on that record was not great. The guitars and vocals were loud, if not clear, but the drums suffered badly from the limitations of a 4-track recorder. Where the bass drum and snare should have been there was mostly guitar, but the hi-hat somehow managed to break through. All of us wrote lyrics for the record, and the guitarists did most of the songwriting.



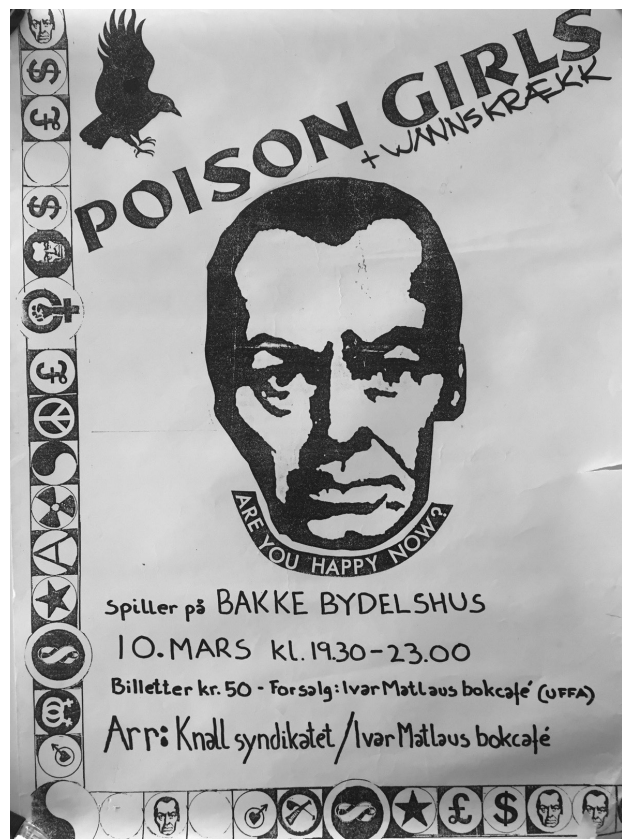
Angor Wat in Leeds (Arne Svalastog)

Our weakness for word play was apparent at this point, with the album entitled *General Strike*, and the cover, made by a Swedish artist, showing a military figure being launched into the air like a missile. The band got copies of the album to sell, and that more or less settled the financial side of it, with no complaints from either side. I have no idea how many copies were made or sold from the album, but we were getting some press in Norway and in fanzines around the world. At home we decided to call for a press conference in the most modern and posh hotel in town. We never made any arrangements with the hotel, and decided it would be a great idea if our friends from the band *Det Glade Vanvidd* showed up instead of us, pretending to be Angor Wat. Much to our surprise the press took the bait, and *Det Glade Vanvidd* knew more about us than we did ourselves, it turned out. Around that time another really interesting idea came up. What if *Poison Girls* could play in Trondheim?

When the Sex Pistols played in Trondheim in '77 I was too young. When The Clash were announced in '81 I bought a ticket immediately. That show was cancelled. Crisis and Cygnus did play at a Rock Against Racism inspired event hosted by the socialist youth at some point. Nobody had ever heard of Crisis or Cygnus before then, or since, but they were English, at the very least. Apart from that, foreign punk bands were nowhere to be seen. Instead we had plenty of great Norwegian bands playing regularly, either at UFFA or clubs in the town. The student centre also booked great bands. But still. *Poison Girls*! In Trondheim! Somehow we got in touch with their manager and many phone calls later the gig was organised. Under normal circumstances we would



have no possibility to make phone call after phone call to England. None of us had a landline, so we had to use the phone booth in a nearby park. Our great and innovative friend Roy had developed a technique, including a steel wire, to fool the box so that you could make phone calls without actually paying anything. Without it the gig might never have happened. We figured UFFA would be too small for the concert so we booked a bigger venue and had the local heroes Wannskrækk as support act to secure a bigger audience. There were issues with the neighbours so the gig had to be finished early and the venue had no permission to sell alcohol. We probably figured PG would be intoxicating enough in their own sense (no pun intended). As organisers we were too busy to actually enjoy the concert, but Poison Girls were every bit as good as we hoped they would be. Vi Subversa connected brilliantly with the Norwegian audience, and the gig still stands out as one of the truly great events in Trondheim during the 80s. In the interview printed in the last issue of our fanzine, *Knall*, Poison Girls talk about the necessity to express emotions other than anger, the female perspective and age. Vi Subversa explains her urge to start the band after “realising that I had something to say, about life and about our anger towards the world we live in. About having kept silent for 40 years”.



Meeting the band, getting to know them and having them stay at our flat in Trondheim was great for us. Our only doubts were related to their choice of stage wear, apparently by their own design. Poison Girls were never the typical dressed-in-all-black anarcho punk band, and if they were those days were now definitely over. But they were not the only band evolving and going through changes. For the support band, these were also times of transition. It would be one of their last gigs as Wannskrækk, and they even had a saxophone player on stage, which was a daring

thing to do for a punk band unless you were X-Ray Spex (Vi Subversa found they sounded a bit like Dr Feelgood). Not long after they changed their name and became Dum Dum Boys, the most popular and successful Norwegian rock band ever. Like no other band, they have been able to have unparalleled success and still maintain their integrity. None of them have appeared as judges on Norwegian Idol, and they are still very much a vital band drawing huge crowds wherever they play in Norway.



Somewhere along the way we started looking at the opportunity for Angor Wat to play in England. It turned out Tim of COR was able to book us for a gig in Leeds, and another one in Sunderland with AOA, who were also on his label. PGs manager was kind enough to book us for two gigs in London, one of them at Dingwalls with Poison Girls, and one at a festival in the south. Until then we had played in Trondheim and Oslo a couple of times, mostly at UFFA and Blitz, often with Bannlyst, who had also been to the UK doing a few shows with The Sears. This was something entirely different; we were going on tour. We bought Inter-rail tickets, probably from our own money, packed sleeping bags, guitars and a jack to jack cable or two (at least I hope we did), and started out at the Sprø Musikk festival near Arendal in Norway. From Norway we took the ferry to Denmark where we also had a gig scheduled. The ferry arrived there late in the evening. We had taken for granted that there was a connecting train to Aalborg where we were playing next. There was not. So there we were, walking the streets of Hirtshals, Denmark with our guitars and backpacks. We managed to find a pub and went in in the hope that someone there could help us out, one way or the other. That's how we ended up sleeping in a tent on a camping site in Hirtshals. Our hosts also slept in the same tent, so I have no idea how we could fit into it. But thank you, unknown tourist of Denmark, who also made us breakfast the next morning.





Poison Girls (Håvard Houen)

We have slept in many strange places since. As a touring alternative band during the 90s, sleeping in a hotel would be the exception, whereas the rule would be crashing on peoples' floors, in squats, sometimes in the concert hall, sometimes with a party in the same room, sometimes with a party next door, sometimes with the parents next door. Sometimes under the threat of cops raiding the house, or neo-Nazis coming to attack. Once in Italy we even played and slept in a swimming pool. The council in the village outside Torino had built the swimming pool, but ran into financial trouble so there was no money left to have water installed. That's where the local squatters came into the picture and hosted a gig with Israelvis and Within Range from Norway. Back in Denmark, 10 years earlier we were playing our first ever gig abroad. The date was August 8<sup>th</sup>, 1985. A guy called Jacob, from Aalborg, had visited UFFA and saw us rehearse there earlier the same year, and wanted to book us for a gig in Aalborg. The gig was held at Huset, with Unity Squad as the support act. The legendary Johnny Concrete of Dream Police had come all the way from Aarhus to

see us, but other than that we don't remember much of it. As Israelvis we visited Aalborg lots of times during the 90s. The Café Tusindfryd was always the perfect stop for any touring band going the long way from Germany to Norway, along what is often called "The Blitz Route".



A train ride later we stood at the stairs to Poison Girls' house in Leytonstone. We rang the bell. Richard Famous opened the door. There were four of us in the band, a friend/photographer travelled with us, and due to circumstances that are still under debate two girlfriends were also part of the entourage. So there were seven of us. By the look on his face I could tell he was not expecting that. Anyway, minutes later some of us were established in the house, and the rest checked into a hotel.

When writing about a tour of the UK, the least a reader could expect is that the author can remember something from the gigs. I may have to disappoint you. And myself too. I remember very little. There are pics of us playing at Meanwhile Gardens. At an outdoor event in central west London. There is a high house in the background. It all happened in broad daylight. Blyth Power played a bit later. People were sitting around like people tend to on a summers day and Angor Wat was playing aggressive, political hardcore in the background.

For a Norwegian punk band to play Dingwalls obviously was a big deal. At the time we were not into big deals. We had no appreciation for big deals. We had no concept of what a big deal even was. But to play in London with the Mekons and Poison Girls came pretty close. I think on some level we realised that, but then again it felt like any other gig. I seem to remember playing a song called *Luxury*: "Our wealth and our luxury/ Our substitutes for life/The bloodred beauty of emptiness/The direct reason for others' death", which pretty much sums up what we've been trying to express in lyrics over the years; the guilt and the glory of western civilisation. I



also have a vague memory of the band being paid 30 pounds. Or maybe we didn't get paid at all, we certainly did not expect to be.

It turns out there were a few Norwegians in the audience. One of them wrote about it for the local newspaper, and a review also appeared in the Panic-fanzine. As Poison Girls played I was standing next to a girl and we started talking. I remember being impressed by the whiteness of her teeth. (I found out about blacklight only later). She was German and had read about this gig of state-of-the-art political rock, and wanted to check it out. We met on Portobello Road the next day. As I was waiting for her Joe Strummer walked by. I wanted to ask her out for dinner and Poison Girls had suggested an Indian restaurant somewhere in London. We were both hungry but it turned out we could only afford the starters. It didn't really matter, we had great conversations about politics, and in particular the autonomous scene in Germany, post RAF. Sometimes you meet people in the strangest places, that give you a different perspective on things, blacklight or not.

Poison Girls were a big band by anarcho punk standards, but also reaching for something more, something else, to expand their audience and prove that they had something to offer beyond preaching to the converted. Even if that never happened in a big way they will always be legends. Vi Subversa was a unique voice in the world of punk. Her perspectives on age, sex, and on the freedom of expression are just as relevant today as they were back then. She was a living rebellion in so many ways, and the band always had the courage to take things in new directions. Some might say they never got the appreciation they deserved, but I would disagree. They were, and will always be a big name for those who seek political, uncompromising music with integrity. I don't think a band could aspire to more. They also greeted us with warmth and hospitality, and opened the doors to their home, which to us was a much greater experience than playing at Dingwalls.

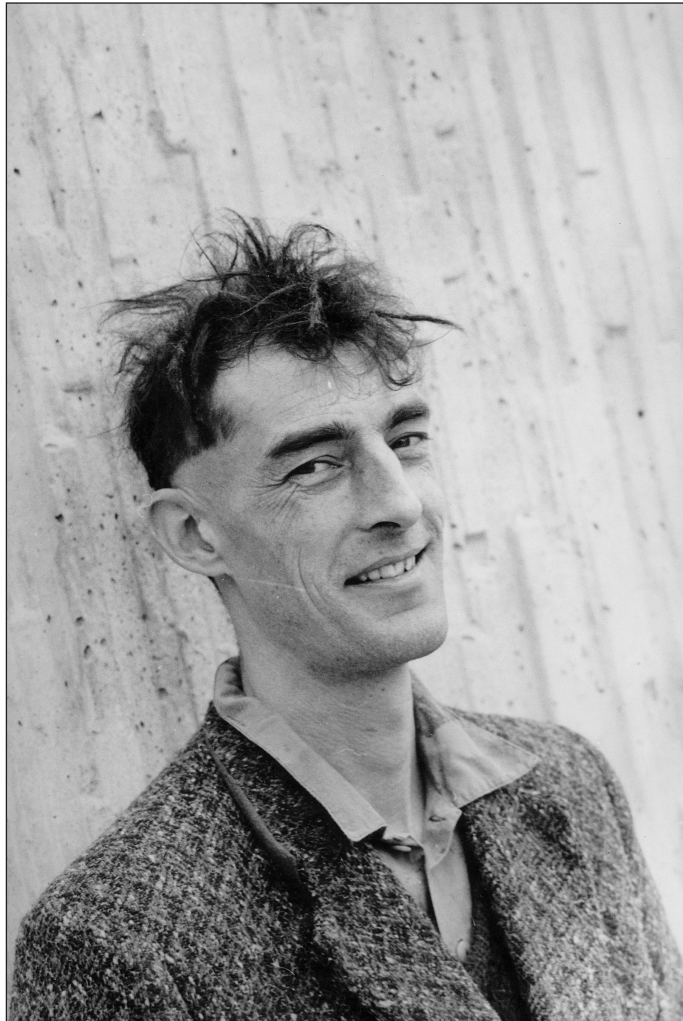
Then there was the festival. The Torpedo Town Free Festival outside Southampton. Angor Wat were due at 7pm, followed by DIRT, Antisect and Subhumans. It must have been an amazing evening, and why we can't seem to remember any of it has nothing to do with drugs or alcohol, so perhaps it's the 40 years that have since passed. Antisect was, literally, already a household name in our punk collective in Gregus street. A year or so earlier some of the band members had been in London where they had seen the future of alternative music: Einstürzende Neubauten with their, to say the least, unconventional instruments, including oil barrels and heavy machinery, and Antisect, the most massive and hard punk band seen to date. But what really stuck with us was their hair style. We did not have many plants in our flat, but everyone seemed to agree that the ones we had – ferns – were the green version of Antisect's impressive black hairdos. So from then on there would be no more talk of ferns in our households, they were, and still are, Antisect plants to us. The drummer and I wanted to see Subhumans that night, but there were no trains to London that late. The others went back, but we took our chances and stayed on with no idea of how to make it back to Leytonstone. I have a vague memory of Subhumans, on a small stage in a big field in darkness, and quite a clear memory of another band giving us a ride in the back of their minivan, arriving somewhere outside London at 5 in the morning where we were left to wait for the first train.

The most vivid memory of our gig in Leeds was of graffiti on the wall, presumably a band name so unforgettable it still sticks with me after all these years: Satan's Willy! The poster for the gig at The Central Station, Wellington Street suggests that we were a late addition to the bill. That might also explain why the headliners, Anti-System, were somewhat reluctant to let us use their gear, that according to them had broken down after being overheated on more than one earlier occasion. The concert was noisy and quite intense. As far as I remember the amps survived, and Anti-System were able to deliver what I reckon would be a heavy blow to any system. We stayed in a nearby squat, and still haunted by a guilty conscience, Håvard, our singer seems to recall that there was only one bed available, and that if someone had to sleep in it, it might just as well be him. I suppose that meant that the rest of us slept on the floor.

That version of Angor Wat lasted less than a year after the England tour. Our last gigs were with The Instigators at UFFA and Blitz, and even if things were happening for us it became obvious that we had to go separate ways at some point. But why? Due to political differences? Veganism? Was the singer no longer a pacifist? Hardly. If someone is to blame it has to be Metallica. In Angor Wat we always listened, and were open to different kinds of music, but the line had to be drawn somewhere. To me it was just as hard to tolerate that Håvard and Assert suddenly found interest in garage rock and bands like the Nomads or Jason & the Scorcherers, as it was for them to witness that Jens-Petter and I had gone in a direction that by then seemed even more unlikely. A new generation of metal bands were on the way. Some of them even claimed to be inspired by Discharge and Killing Joke. So for us the likes of Voivod and Metallica were a revelation. As were Amebix and Sacrilege, of course. The other guys went on to form a new band called Transsiberian Hijackers. They made a single and played around Norway for a year or two before breaking up. Jens-Petter and I continued as Angor Wat and recruited new members. After a year or two we changed the name of the band to Israelvis. Israelvis was an active band for most of the 90s, with a number of albums and extensive touring in Norway and many European countries. We never made it to the UK though, and for many years the bands in our scene were more likely to be Scandinavian, American or Italian than English. The touring options and the political awareness was more likely to be found in Oslo, Copenhagen or Hamburg, and even getting a gig in England was more or less impossible.

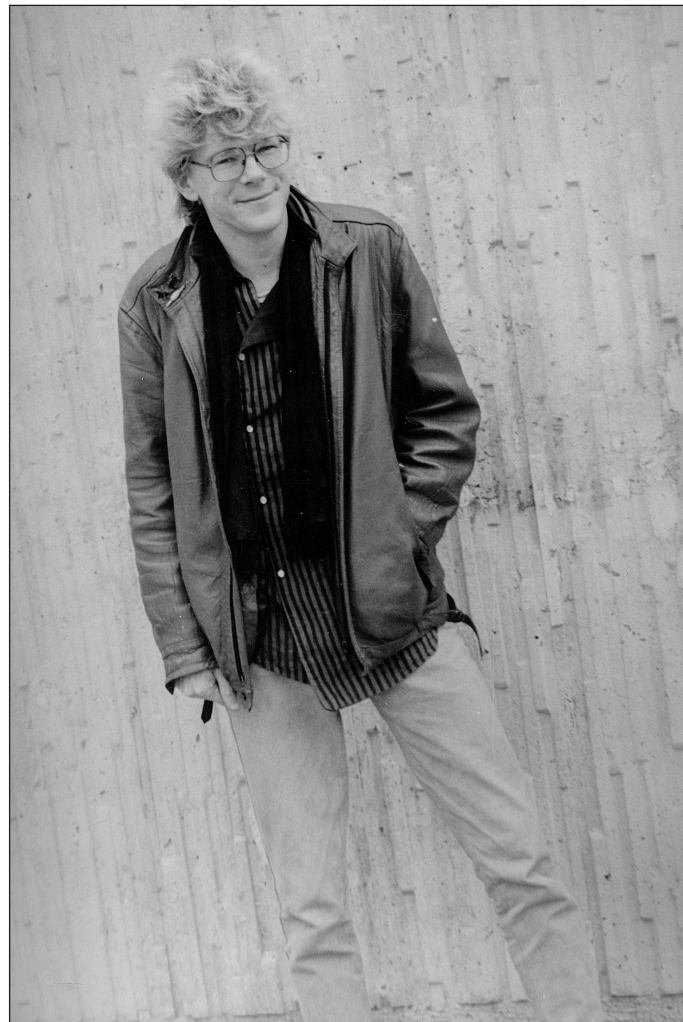
But no matter what happened in the 90s or the 00s, those four or five years during the mid-80s with Angor Wat stand out. It seems almost too obvious to say that those were the years that shaped us, but they did. The ideology, the identity that Crass expressed like no other band and that influenced young punks all over the world still is a part of us. It has shaped us as musicians, as singers of songs, as writers, as students, as employees, as bosses, as parents. It also kept us from succumbing to left wing politics, and to maintain an anarchist perspective beyond left-right dichotomies. It's there in situations when you least expect it; like the other day when I attended a meeting at my day job at the university, and was seated next to a Nobel Prize winner who based her entire career on experiments on rat brains. Thanks to Conflict and *A Nation of Animal Lovers* I was disgusted rather than impressed or starstruck by her presence. The only difference is these days I might choose to keep my mouth shut. But then again, Angor Wat always were the good guys. Politically correct, middle class, nice guys. Not the cool rock star type, but probably conceived of as very self-certain and besserwisser. And it





might be true that we made no apologies, never doubted what we were doing and never asked for anyone's opinion. I'd say we did our thing with conviction, to the best of our ability, and with little attention to our own shortcomings (apparent in hindsight). Still there was always a sense of humour, an essence of compassion, and a total disregard for money, partly because we could afford to, partly because we honestly did not care.

We never had an ambition to do this for a living, and never made any money from any of our band related activities, and if we did it always went directly back to band, to the fanzine or to the label. Taking money for ourselves was out of the question, and most of the time we managed to survive on student loans, that were available as long as we were registered students (the fact that they were loans means that we are still paying for it on a monthly basis). We were also always looking for ways to keep expenses to a minimum, and actually doing it was more important than the technical or artistic qualities, and it was always a matter of what was being said, more than how we expressed it. And it certainly was more about anarchy, peace and freedom than sex, drugs or rock'n'roll. Not that we weren't as interested in sex as the next guy, or that we didn't accept drugs as an integrated part of the music scene even if we didn't go down that road ourselves. And of course we loved rock'n'roll, at least as long as it did not smell of boogie and had distorted guitars. But to see them as some kind of holy trinity? No way. Music is at its best when it is part of something bigger than that, something more, a scene, and a cause. In those days we thought of ourselves as part of such a scene, and 40 years later, believe it or not, we still do.



Poison Girls (Håvard Houen)



### Epilogue

After the *Knall* fanzine we joined forces with friends and colleagues at the UFFA house and started *Folk & Røvere* (1986-94), a radical magazine covering culture and politics that had nationwide distribution and a circulation of up to 6000 copies. Jens-Petter moved on to launch Progress, and later Kong-Tiki Records, labels that featured a number of prominent Norwegian underground bands. Håvard, the singer, pursued a career in photography, and together with Roy the phone hacker he covered conflicts in places like East Timor, Sri Lanka, Mexico, Kurdistan and Sudan. Their book “Black and White in Colour” was released in 1998. The bass player, Assert, gave up his career as a hairdresser and today holds a PhD in film and media science at the Norwegian University for Science and Technology. He recently released a book on the role of sound in film, TV and modern art.

UFFA is still up and running, even if the scene in Trondheim has expanded to Svartlamon, an old working class district transformed into an alternative community close to the city center. In Oslo, Blitz survived the 80s and the decades to follow, and still attracts radical people and ideas from all over the country. Members of Bannlyst and Life... But How To Live It? can now be seen and heard in the brilliant Danger!man. Gunnar of So Much Hate and Kafka Prosess lives in Germany where he sings for Bone Idles. Katja from Life... But How To Live It?, Jens-Petter and myself are CASTRO, and we have the album *River Need* out on Boss Tuneage records. Casino Steel was last seen touring China with The Boys promoting their album *Punk Rock Menopause*. When visiting my mum a few weeks ago I read in the local paper that Ågot just turned 70. She no longer runs the post office.

Thanks a lot Kjell-Arne “Kjelli” Sandvik for being the go-to-guy for anything related to Norwegian punk rock, and for the support in providing background info for this piece of writing. He was even there when Angor Wat played at Dingwalls!

Finally I would like to celebrate the memory of Børre; guitar hero of Bannlyst, Stengte Dører and So Much Hate, Erik; singer, friend and founding member of Angor Wat, and of course Vi Subversa, a true punk rock legend.

## SHOULD WE HELP THE MINERS?

### Andy Hardcore

Having grown up in the South Yorkshire mining village of Shafton and going to school in Grimethorpe, my relatives, my friends’ parents and relatives either had, at some point or still did, work within the mining industry. As kids we played and messed about around the coal trucks, the slag heaps and the NCB woodlands. The view from the school windows was the pit and for many kids gazing out of those windows that pit was to be their future, or so they thought.



I never wanted a part of that, I embraced punk early on, and by 1980 Crass were the be all and end all in my life, as I threw myself into the anarcho punk scene. The late '70s punk explosion had ignited the fire, the channelled anger of Crass was just what I had been waiting for, and there was no going back now. *Bullshit Detector* gave us the nudge to do it ourselves, anyone could stand up and make a noise,



and we did – The Subzeros, Societies Vultures & Kulturkampf were the noise of our small mining village, we soon found others within a bus ride Passion Killers & Chumbawamba, the Peace Centre in Sheffield which introduced us to the squatting scene, the fire was now a raging inferno! Through the fanzine networks and letter writing I got to know and meet so many people, I could hitch anywhere in the country and for the most part find some like-minded people who would gladly put me up for the night, before long like many others in that time I was a teenage runaway so much was happening with anarcho punk, I wanted no part of home or school life and I left that small mining village forever with just a rucksack, a sleeping bag and the black clothes I stood up in. The Poison Girls were touring around this time, where better to start! I followed them around the country, Vi treating us rag tag bunch of kids very well I don't think I ever paid to get in to see them. She let us have food from their rider and even let us play support at Bradford Queens Hall when no other bands had turned up – drums and vocals doing Crass covers! The Poison Girls gig in Leeds is where I met Raf for the first time, we had exchanged letters through his well-respected fanzine *Acts of Defiance*, he had hitched down from Sunderland for the gig and needed somewhere to stay for the night. Chumbawamba were in the audience that night and as they were about to set off down South somewhere for a gig let me have the key to their house in Armley: that was Raf and lots of others sorted for the night. The next day we put the key through the letterbox and went on our way, Raf returning to Sunderland whilst I continued on with the Poisons to, I think, Hull. Saying my goodbyes to Raf his parting words were “*you must come to Sunderland, Alternative are playing next week, you can stay at mine*” – I did go, and I'm still there today!



Sunderland in 1983 was heaven for an anarcho punk kid, it had The Bunker, the fanzine *Acts of Defiance* and a few miles away in Gateshead was The Station, we didn't have to go anywhere to see the bands – they all came to us. Before long I was sharing a rented flat with Raf, playing in the band Famous Imposters and was part of the collective of people who ran The Bunker. I think a lot of people will have seen The Bunker as some sort of anarchist, autonomy centre but that wasn't

strictly true. The space was donated to us from the local council, three youth workers had an office there to keep an eye on us but they were lovely people who helped us to just get on with it. Although well known for the anarcho punk gigs we put on other groups and people were also involved with various projects there, including rehearsal rooms, café space and workshops collectively run by punks, hippies and other alternative types. Although the 1980s were hard times we could easily survive a basic existence on the dole, your rent got paid by the local council and between playing in bands, organising gigs at The Bunker and being involved in its day to day running we kept ourselves busy – working for anarchy in its most positive sense. We fully embraced the whole anarcho punk scene animal rights, anti-war, anti-racism, you name it we were anti it.



The North East and in particular the East Durham mining villages had a lot of similarities to the Yorkshire Villages I grew up in, close knit working class communities, down to earth people with no time for dreaming about anarchy, but we did have a common enemy: Thatcher's government. Dissent was in the air and I liked the sound of that! The 1980s had so many factions and divisions, I feel partly responsible for taking part in that, anarcho punk was an insular movement we alienated many who could have helped us and that was probably our main downfall, but hindsight is a wonderful thing isn't it? I remember well sitting down with Raf and others shortly after the miners strike had begun, it was obvious the miners and their families were in for a hard time but should we help them? The discussion went something along these lines, the miners eat meat, are they racist? Are they sexist? Would they help us in our perceived struggle? So why should we help them? After much discussion late into the night we came to the conclusion that their struggle against the government should be supported, after all the miners children and families didn't deserve what was about to happen to them. Where to start though? How do black ragged anarcho punks go about forming some sort of alliance with a tight knit community who probably didn't even know we existed? Well it started at around 4am one morning when we decided to take the bull by the horns and attend the picket line at Monkwearmouth Colliery, it seemed like a good opportunity to



introduce ourselves! Memory fades but I think the youth workers at the Bunker had previously had contact with the miners wives groups and had encouraged us to go along and see for ourselves, Raf, myself and around half a dozen punks from the Bunker went along and surprisingly to us were greeted warmly with only one or two funny looks (don't blame them to be honest!) It's difficult now to remember numbers but there seemed to be maybe two to three hundred miners with a similar amount of police. The police lined the entrance to the colliery linking hands holding the miners back from the road, as two buses arrived with mesh on the windows all hell broke loose, reminiscent of a football match, the miners surged forward pushing, screaming and shouting at the police line, stones and other missiles rained down on the buses and the police, grown men spat in the faces of the police – snatch squads arrested a few of the miners but on the whole the police just held their ground and allowed the buses taking the strike breakers in to get on with it. Wagons arrived to haul coal away, some went in some turned round and left, it was all over pretty quick but what an eye opener when you're just a kid seeing grown men of all ages so angry, so angry against the police and the government – yes we were going to help the miners! I did attend the early morning picket lines a few times, it was exciting to be in amongst it but I could see that's not where they needed help: preventing their families from starving was our main priority.



A couple of months into the strike and it seemed like the anarcho punks had decided that yes, overall we should support and help the miners. Initially we organised a benefit gig at Sunderland Poly, we felt students had some disposable income and a close friend of ours was the regular student disco DJ so getting the use of the large hall was fairly easy. Famous Imposters (our band), Das Kapital and The Purple Helmets along with Tommy Hair's Dub War Disco played the first miners benefit we put on, making it a roaring success with lots of paying punters. The bands played for free, PA and disco all for free which ended up with us giving the miners wives group more than £400 for the food bank/kitchen they had set up. The miners wives came to the Bunker to collect the money from us, they cried, I wanted to cry, it was a pretty difficult meeting but I think we were as overwhelmed as they were. We told

them it was only the beginning and that we were going to do as much as possible to help them. Onwards! Next up we arranged a larger benefit for them at the Bunker, Flux Of Pink Indians, KUKL, D&V, Chumbawamba the bands played for minimal expenses (in fact that whole tour of the UK was a benefit for the striking miners) and once again we raised a considerable sum for the miners wives group.

We had invited the miners' wives along to this gig, I think two of them came along with six representatives from the local NUM, big blokes reduced to tears when we tipped all that money into their bucket. They met the bands and shook their hands it was a very emotional night that I will never forget, it felt like we were forming a genuine alliance with a group of people who were willing to stand up and fight for what they believed in, it felt like maybe they could win and we were happy to play a small part in their struggle. For once it felt like we were really making a difference, we were maybe outside of our insular comfort zone dealing with people we wouldn't normally have any contact with but this was real, a group of ordinary working class people were fighting back and it felt right that we should put our differences aside and help in anyway possible.



Like I said previously the Bunker wasn't all about anarcho punk and one of the largest, most together benefits for the miners there was organised by the lads from the local Sunderland band Patrick, who had been involved with the Bunker and Sunderland musicians collective since its inception in the early '80s. I'm sure most people will remember the Channel 4 TV programme *The Tube*, well it was filmed in Newcastle ten miles up the road from the Bunker, The Redskins and Billy Bragg were due to perform there and as *The Tube* was filmed on the afternoon/early evening they kindly got in touch with the Bunker to see if they could play a benefit for the miners on the night after they had recorded for *The Tube*, they had heard about the Bunker and that we were doing benefits for the miners, and of course we were happy to facilitate them. The Redskins' performance on *The Tube* is famous for the inclusion of Norman Strike (an outspoken striking miner from Westoe Colliery in South Shields). The Redskins had arranged for Norman to get up during their performance to give a speech to the nation about the strike but Channel 4 turned the microphone

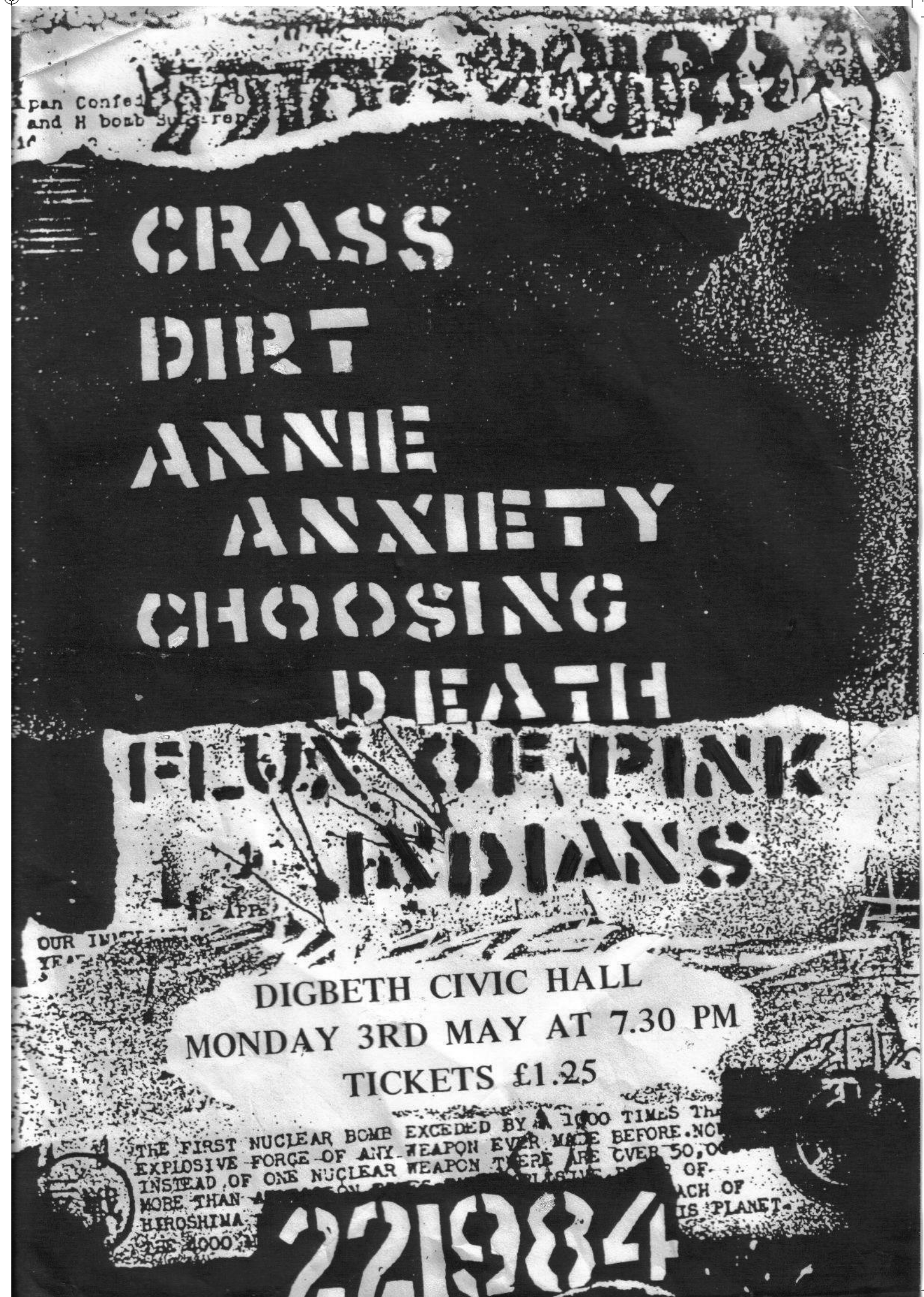


off; he got his chance at the Bunker though! The Redskins brought him through and he got to deliver his speech to the crowd that night, not quite national TV but very kind of The Redskins. Once again representatives of the NUM came to the Bunker, this time they got on stage gave thanks to everyone, and graciously accepted the bucketful of money, once again grown men humbled and in tears. At this point I think the miners were into week 35 of the strike, the cracks were appearing.

There was another youth project in Sunderland through the early 1980s, The Community Arts Project (CAPs) the prime mover being a really nice bloke called Mick Catmull who helped and encouraged allsorts of activities for lots of the Bunker people. With photography, pirate radio and housing co-ops all on the agenda, Mick was also interested and involved with the film and television industry and through his contacts we were helping to facilitate the Ken Loach film on Arthur Scargill speaking to the miners at Monkwearmouth Working Mens Club. My mate Alan Christie, myself and a few others from the Bunker were invited to help out. We met Ken Loach at the CAPs project on the morning of the filming, he was a nice bloke, he offered Christie and me a days work on the crew carrying stuff, helping with the set up etc. He was really interested in hearing about The Bunker, CAPs and how we had been raising funds for the miners' families. After the set up drinks were free for us so I don't remember much about Arthur Scargill's talk, but I do remember it was a packed house and that we were treated very well by everyone we encountered that day.

The miners strike ended on the 3rd of March 1985. Broken, they returned back to work. Thatcher had won and that was only the start. By the end of 1985 it felt like, to me, that the anarcho punk movement was losing something. People were starting to dwindle away, gigs didn't seem as well attended, things were changing and although gigs at the Bunker carried on for a while I devoted my energies into the free festival scene, which also saw its fair share of state oppression. It started with the miners and ended in a field in Wiltshire: state violence out of control. For a very brief period it felt as though this country was on the verge of change, the anarcho punk scene played a small part in that but I don't really know what we can take from it or whether we really did make much of a difference, but at least we tried.

Skip forward to 2007 and a friend of ours from the Bunker days (Booga, bass player in Patrick) as part of his MA course was doing an exhibition of all things Bunker related which ended up with him collating an archive of material from back in the day. When he had finished his MA he decided to create a web site "The Bunker Archive" which sadly is no longer in existence although friends do have copies of this on disc. In time honoured tradition a few of us got together to arrange a benefit gig to pay for the domain name and website optimisation etc, this was successful and paid the first years fees. Second year we had a whip round to pay the fees, coming up to the third year. Booga was once again trying to raise some funds to keep the site active when out of the blue he gets an email from a group of former mine workers who had remembered what the Bunker had done for them during the strike. They had seen the Bunker archive site and subsequently made an anonymous donation to pay the fees for a year. Never underestimate the power of good will!





# ANGRY! CLASS WAR

YOU ARE NOT NEEDED  
YOU ARE NOT WANTED  
AND YOU WILL BE THE FIRST  
AGAINST THE WALL



LET THE BLOOD  
RUN BLUE 

## POEMS BY TS PAVIOUR

### Religion

The predator priest at the alter eyeing up the young the  
nonceing ponceing vicar the nun

That's never cum

The choir boys family are poor from the abuse he suffers  
he's red and raw village fate council estate there's always  
room for more

A cunt nailed to a cross. The wars you love to endorse while  
you sip your holy wine and hide behind stone walls.

The bollocks they call a sermon, mind games full of deceit.

Collection plate, power estate, that's something you'll never see

The parasite parish paedophile the clown in a gown

you have to stick to steady feet cause there's always one around.

### Get Up Go To Work Come Home Go To Bed

Get up go to work come home go to bed

Welcome to the real world

Oh my God culture shock

Claxton blast, clock card

One minute late lose quarter of an hours pay

Production line job on time

Forty-hour week towing the line

Part of the team, being on board,

Bollocks you're

Pondlife and on the shopfloor

And if your face don't fit you'll get the shit

The time sheet's a lie sheet

For the work shy with the family ties

And they're always paid more

Cause the foreman's their brother-in-law

And the uni temp knows everything

Lend them money never seen again

The we want more, never happy, call another meeting old score

The company's going under a rumour from the  
prophet of disaster

Looking down his nose Mr City and Guilds but semi skilled

The urgent job when the drivers waiting



The work hard and never get a mention  
The ones who think they're owed a living  
Meeting the boss and his lovely wife  
Promotion's bleak if you phone in sick  
Middle management up there own arses  
Health and safety two-faced bastards  
The HR witch who stirs the shit  
The been here for ever and we hate everything  
Out on strike union shite  
Mr extremely important really a nobody  
Billy no mates at the works do once again  
Buy a raffle ticket never win anything  
Get up go to work come home go to bed  
Get up go to work come home go to work

#### The Other Side of the Coin

Coppers fleecing  
Early releasing  
Gangs that kill just for a thrill  
H.I.V. rife, not very nice  
Needle exchange, kids on the game  
A parasite pimp, a habit that stinks  
Ponceing and stealing, arms wont stop bleeding  
Chased by the law, need money for more  
Withdrawals from hell, bedsits that smell  
The magistrates frown as he's sending you down  
Nowhere to hide, there's plenty inside  
A far away land a crop that's been banned.  
The other side of the coin  
A country war torn  
And it's an honour to the suicide bomber  
And the kids learn to kill then turn on each other  
And the hate filled cleric claims state benefits  
People mislead torture widespread no hospital beds  
no medicine left  
And the west sends a reply with hell from the skies  
And a barrel of crude oil doubles its price

Missing famine relief, corruption disease, as desperate people  
turn desperate thieves  
And sanctions hit hard as winter sets in  
And the fighting turns ethnic forcing thousands to flee,  
with nowhere to hide, and no going back as neighbours close  
borders and then turn their backs.  
A ruthless regime fight to survive, war crimes committed  
now on both sides  
And the west just replies, hell from the skies, dictatorship  
falls, now it's mob rule.  
As anger sets in jihad begins and the easily lead turn  
fundamentalist, kidnapping beheading is next and the poppies  
yield the next killing fields to finance the gun the Russian  
made one  
And Kalashnikovs lead will scatter more dead and the threat  
to the west flies back in the red.  
And brave ones fly out from Brize tonight, trying to stop  
more genocide and some will pay the ultimate price, six gun  
salute, flag at half mask, others lose limbs, some will have  
cracked and relieve the horrors in their flashbacks.  
And business is business as morphine runs low, supply and  
demand more poppies are grown.  
But this is one fight that no one can win as long as there's  
a demand for Miss Heroin.

#### School

School the building block of life  
Whistle blows, stand still  
Control freak, playground chill  
Form a queue, an orderly line  
Curriculum, start at nine  
School tie, telling lies  
Career advice, head lice  
BCG and the Gideon's free  
The kid that dies has no life  
Sit up straight, made to pray  
Assembly, the N.U.T



Cut backs, not enough books  
Toilet roll is tracing paper  
Hands up don't answer back  
Whipped by towels in the freezing cold showers  
Last one picked because your shit  
A psycho for PE, a kicking of the bully at quarter past three  
Bunking off getting caught, beetle round on report  
Dunces class doing art  
Janet and John  
Mock exam uni scam  
Amount to nothing on our time  
Enjoy the pain from Mr Cane  
Light a fag on the school bus  
Now find a job worthless yob

#### The Great Recycling Swindle

Man evolves from ape mother nature's big mistake  
Should have left him in the trees wanking eating leaves  
And Bowie sang planet earth is blue, but he also sang ashes  
to ashes  
And as long as man walks the face of this earth as long as  
there's a hole in his arse  
There will always be his rubbish  
Guaranteed till the day he dies rubbish rubbish and  
more rubbish.  
Cause there's things in the sea that shouldn't be and what  
don't sink washes ashore  
Cracks appear slamming shut, what don't melt freezes up  
The carbon footprint's a stampede  
The rain forest has now been felled it was a great  
monkey world  
But that soon changed when it became a timber yard.  
Overpopulation drought starvation  
The sea levels rising Chernobyl once was thriving  
The sun gives you cancer the ozone needs palliative care  
CO2's gone through the roof climate change won't go away  
The ice caps are melting and floods will change everything.

And we should be called the human disgrace or cockroach race  
Cause we're all to blame cause we love making rubbish  
And being green's frowned upon the colour's changed to dog  
shit brown  
And you're a geek if you recycle so what's a G8 summit for?  
But where there's muck there's brass and money brings  
corruption  
If you find something and take it home your a thieving bastard  
And that stinks worse than rubbish as it's endorsed by  
council posters  
And what's a wamitab?  
Fit for purpose skills what a load of bollocks what about fewer  
trips to blue haze cutting down on landfill?  
Oh sorry I forgot the pile's a holy shrine cause I want  
my overtime  
But why worry anyway you can buy a new one on ebay  
Fuck the planet can't be bothered not our lifetime just  
our rubbish  
So how about leaving it for your grandkids and their kids  
great idea  
And we'll call it  
The great recycling swindle  
And that stinks.

#### Democracy

Build an army create a religion form a government  
tell them god's with them  
Terrify the poor while you fill your own pockets  
make them pray and give god their homage  
Blood sucking royals corrupt lying thieves police  
on the take and it's called democracy.



# THE MOB

(UK ANARCHO-PUNK LEGENDS)

SILENT  
SCREAM

(post-punk)

[di: unru:]

(post-punk)

RIXTET

(VASTAVIRTA ONLY!)

SIERPIEK

(NOSTURI ONLY, russian post-punk)

21.10. vastavirta, tampere

tickets 10 €

22.10. nosturi, helsinki

tickets 10/12 €



## THE MOB TOURING FINLAND (2016)

### Antti Lautala

I've been organising gigs for bands as a hobby for some time. I do it for the love of music and alternative culture. It is great to bring my favourite bands to Finland, meet like-minded people and co-operate with them. Organising these gigs have been done with help of my mates of Silent Scream and Joose Berglund (Stupido Records and bookings). To mention a few, we have brought UK Decay, Part 1 and The Mob to Finland. I saw The Mob live at Puntalarock in 2013, an annual punk-festival near Tampere. I was gobsmacked at just how good they were live. The reception of the audience was almost ecstatic. I've always loved their music, so, it was a must to see them when they reformed! The Mob have always stood out from the pack, with great lyrics backed with deeply moving music. You can see and feel it and most of all you can hear it: it is honest, and people crying in the audience is not something you see often at punk gigs! Booking The Mob was done by Silent Scream and our friends [di: unru:]. At some point Joose joined in to help again. Gigs were on October 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> (Friday and Saturday). Mark, Marta and Nick flew in Wednesday night. Nick was their new drummer. He had played only five shows with the band so far. Marta was Mark's partner. I picked them up from the airport. The next morning The Mob had an interview at Radio Helsinki. We drove there and met Jan there as well. Mark was the one talking most and they played two tracks from the album as well. Next stop was at the Stupido Records office. The band brought some Part 1 and Suicidas records, which we swap for Silent Scream's Carrion Screaming album.

We had lunch at the vegetarian restaurant around the corner and headed to Suomenlinna. It is a really nice island 15 minutes ferry ride away from the harbour. It used to be a military island, which protected the city years ago. Now it is a popular place for tourists to visit, as there are ruins of a castle, caves and a really good view over the sea to Helsinki. It was cold and windy, but we had a really nice time. The sun was setting when we left and 'Northern Sky' by Nick Drake blasted loudly in my head. We walked into the centre of Helsinki and had a few pints at a rock bar called Loose. The band stayed at my flat. Mark and Marta went to a sauna whilst Nick and I picked Curtis up from the airport. We were going to leave for Tampere around midday on Friday. Jan and Matthew picked up the rental van from the centre of Helsinki and then came over to pick us up. Travelling to Tampere went smoothly, listening to The Psychedelic Furs, PIL and The Ruts. We sang along to familiar songs and saw the huge tower advert of Sunny Car Centre: the biggest bluff of last year. It was a sign erected by a Finnish businessman who ripped off quite a few people. He told them that he was going to build the largest car outlet centre in Europe. It was supposed to be built on the field in the middle of nowhere. The only thing that was built was a huge advert tower built on the swamp! The businessman ran away to USA and the rest is history. On the way to Tampere, Matthew received a text from his friend telling him that the Vastavirta-Club was sold out in advance! We were amazed!

When we arrived at Tampere The Mob signed into a cheap hotel and we drove to the club. There were a few hours to wait until the doors opened, so we had

a couple of pints upstairs. Silent Scream drummer Juki joined us as he was working nearby. There were four bands on the bill, [di: unru:], Silent Scream, Riistetyt and The Mob. When we went back to the venue, it was packed to the brim. There were so many people in the club that it was difficult to move. The Mob were the heroes of the night, with the crowd going bananas. We celebrated the success and The Mob sold most of their t-shirts and records at the first gig. Saturday morning was cold and grey. I slept with the [di: unru:] guys at the downstairs of some flat. It was really pleasant as you were able to go to shower and sleep on a bed. Around midday it was time to drive back to Helsinki. Whilst the Vastavirta-Club is a small punk venue, with a capacity of about 100, Nosturi, the venue in Helsinki is the complete opposite. It is a big venue with the capacity of about 1000! We were a bit worried about how many people would attend, but eventually 350 people arrived and it was a success as well. This time there was Sierpien from Moscow, [di: unru:], Silent Scream, The Heartburns and The Mob.

The Heartburns were a very popular Finnish punk band and they played their very last gig that evening. Perhaps it was because of that that they drew in lots of crowd too. It was a really good international gathering as Sierpien brought some of our mutual friends from Russia with them. They were amazed of the size of the venue. That venue puts up shows for semi big and big foreign bands. Discharge played there earlier in the autumn, but there were more people who came to see The Mob! Sierpien played first and there was only a small crowd when they started, but slowly the place started to fill up. The Heartburns played last and The Mob before them. There was a little balcony at the side of the stage for the sound engineer. We watched The Mob from up there. It was like a religious gathering. The crowd sang every word of every song. They were smiling and crying. It really was amazing. The Mob delivered the goods that's for sure. It is funny as The Mob is not a band that puts on any kind of 'show'. They simply play, but they live those songs while they play. I guess that is their secret, there is no rock 'n' roll, no bullshit factor, it is pure and simple and it hits you in your heart and brain. Perfect match. I bet people who came to see them think the same, because I saw their faces. You could tell they were moved. It was a truly great night, with every band playing a really good set. Matthew demolished his bass guitar at the end of the Silent Scream slot. He told me that there was some "bad electric in his brain". Overall, it was a great evening: a gathering of like-minded spirits, full of laughing and excitement. The only thing that over-shadowed the weekend was the fact that Curtis was going to leave The Mob. It was really sad to know, as Curtis' bass playing was an integral part of their sound. I guess that was one reason why those two shows were so very good, passionate and powerful. The Mob stayed the last night at my flat, with Curtis falling asleep with his boots and jacket on. He was surprised when he woke up! I picked the van from the venue in the morning. We had breakfast and then it was time to leave. I drove the band to the airport and it was time to say goodbye.



# THE BLUE RINSE STARTS TO RUN



Some people would like to see the police made more accountable, more 'democratic'. Our attitude is a little simpler. We hate them.

All politicians, of whatever party, are united in their desire for a strong police force. Despite some feeble criticisms they always end up congratulating them for a 'good job done'. But when the police are portrayed as kindly and supportive, we know the reality is far different. Arrogant, brutal, repressive: we have every reason to see the law as an occupying force on our streets. And we have every right to deal with them as such.

Ever since they were set up in the middle of the last century, the police have been at the forefront in the efforts to control the working class. By protecting the wealthy from attack they have forced crime back into our own ranks. The true meaning of law and order is for us to vent our anger on each other instead of letting the rich and privileged take the full brunt of our instinctive class hatred. Racism and petty crime amongst people who should be fighting side by side, together with the shadowy control wielded by organised criminals over their own communities all add up to the old game of divide and rule. Whether knowingly supported or not, this policy is backed by every one of our so called representatives.

With the collapse of the welfare state the leftist fantasy of "policing by consent" becomes more absurd every day. The attacks on our already pitiful living standards can only be made when backed by the strong arm of the law. It may be smashing up workers' picket lines and occupations, the onslaught against unauthorised gatherings of the young and unemployed, or raids into our housing estates and homes. How can we "consent" to this? Only the cosseted middle class can pretend this doesn't happen - and that it won't happen on an ever wider scale.

He said that CND was extremely sorry that "as a result of an accident a policeman was injured and we shall be sending a message of sympathy." Another get well message came from Mrs Glenys Kinnock, who was among the demonstrators at Greenham on Sunday, and her husband Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour Party leader. The policeman, Inspector Michael Page, was said to be comfortable in hospital.

Fourteen police forces in England and Wales are authorised to use the bullets, which were introduced in 1981 after the inner city riots. In Northern Ireland, the army has used them since 1975 and the Royal Ulster Constabulary since 1978.

To date, 11 people, including six aged 15 or below, have been killed by plastic bullets and hundreds very seriously injured. Professor Pat Wall, of University College, London, told a press conference.

THE GUARDIAN Tuesday December 13 1983

We say that the Police Bill merely legalises what is already common practice on our streets. The Police Bill is a blatant threat to the working class. "Our" rulers are telling us that should we step out of line in any way they deem, they will set the full fury of the police onto us. And these are early days yet. What other repressive laws are they going to come up with

as the crisis bites deeper? These new provisions are preparations that they are making for a stormy future. If we are serious we must make ours without delay and get ready to meet them on our own terrain, the streets.

By looking at the Police Bill in a wider social context, we can see that it is designed to meet a more violent class response to the deepening crisis in our cities. By making legal provisions for area saturation policing, this shows that their concern is not only the control of individuals but also the quelling of the first signs of urban revolt. They want to drive us off the streets and back into an isolated existence locked up in our own homes, pursuing a sterile privatised lifestyle, never questioning the system as it crumbles around us. They will not tolerate any life outside those activities and spheres of influence they organise and control.

But there is an answer: 1981 destroyed the myth of police invincibility. For a week the whole establishment was rocked to its foundations as town after town exploded with our reply to class society. Despite their shortcomings, these events marked the change from mere defensive reflexes to an offensive against the system. They set the tone for the future. The ruling class knows that. So do we. Let us get down to business.

## Peel's Police, RAW LOBSTERS, Blue Devils,

Or by whatever other appropriate Name  
they may be known.

### Notice is hereby given,

That a Subscription has been entered into, to supply the **PEOPLE** with **STAVES** of a superior Effect, either for Defence or Punishment, which will be in readiness to be gratuitously distributed whenever a similar unprovoked, and therefore unmanly and blood-thirsty Attack, be again made upon Englishmen, by a Force unknown to the British Constitution, and called into existence by a Parliament illegally constituted, legislating for their individual interests, consequently in opposition to the Public good.

Anti-Police broadsheet handed out in 1830

Crass

## CRASS

Graham Burnett

I first heard Crass in 1978. It was in Projection Records - Southend's 'alternative' vinyl outlet, and I was perusing the avant-garde jazz section at the time (a love of mine which pre-dates any interest I had in punk, and continues to this day...). A bunch of local punks with whom I was on nodding terms were harassing Barry Martin, the shop's long suffering blues enthusiast owner (now better known as guitar legend Automatic Slim and still plying his passion with live stalwarts The Hamsters incidentally) into playing a just arrived 12 inch single. It had a black and white cover featuring somebody walking about with a huge but rather dodgy looking banner in a muddy field, and looked intriguing. Eventually Barry put it on, and our ears were assaulted by a searing barrage of noise.

The energy and excitement of the 'first wave' of punk was declining fast - The Pistols had been reduced to artistic carry-on flogging dead horses like cutting novelty records with Ronnie Biggs; The Clash were no longer bored with the USA but were now being over-produced with an eye to cracking that very market; and the DIY ethos of the Desperate Bicycles had been overtaken by the corporate 'new wave' of The Cars and The Jags. Beyond the shock of the new and the short-lived arse kicking of the complacent rock dinosaurs like Genesis and the Rolling Stones, it was once again the same old music in the same old kitchen.

But this was somehow different, a raw and disturbing discord, what I'd imagined punk should really be all about, yet so far had never quite delivered. I bought a copy, and at home played it with the accompanying lyric sheet. The words to the 17 Crass songs contained on *Feeding Of The 5000* weren't exactly sophisticated, but they articulated an uncompromising rage at the order of things. Current Prime Minister Jim Callaghan and his soon-to-be successor Margaret Thatcher, Christ, Buddha, The Clash, The State, The System, nuclear weapons, patriarchy, Securicor guards and complacent hippies - the usual suspects and sacred cows alike were all up for slaughter amongst the buzzsaw guitars and militaristic drumming, and I was revelling in the bloodbath (strictly metaphorically you understand - I was already a vegetarian by this stage...). But there was one lyric that I found particularly challenging - never mind not giving a toss about that fucker Jesus, the assertion that "MARX FUCKS!" was one invective too far... I was as righteously outraged as only a 17 year old *Socialist Worker* paper seller can be. I'd been drawn into Rock Against Racism by the big Carnivals, and the pidgin Trotskyism of the SWP offered all the answers to a youth aware enough to realise that whilst Labour wasn't working, the Tories would only ever work for their own class and that the National Front were a Nazi front. I can still remember penning an earnest letter to these upstart naive anarchists pointing out the error of their ways. Where was their political analysis? Their grasp of theory? How could they dismiss such an important economic and social philosopher with just two ill thought out words of abuse? I never posted it. Instead I played the record again. And again. "MARX FUCKS". How dare they? That great man. Those important ideas. Those big thick books that I borrowed from the library and pretended to understand. Those pub



and classroom arguments I couldn't afford to lose. That cool little red enamel clenched fist badge Full Party Members were allowed to wear and that I coveted so... So what was their alternative anyway? Anarchy?? Do it yourself???? Take responsibility for your own actions????? The song *Sucks* was the Zen-style whack on the side of the head that knocked me into new ways of seeing politics just as the white noise of detuned guitars and off station radios opened my eyes to the musical possibilities of punk beyond cranked up 12 bar rock n roll riffing...

I actually met Crass for the first time about 18 months later when Chris, Steve and I interviewed them for our fanzine, *New Crimes*. Amongst all the earnest questions we asked them about CND, war, squatting, Northern Ireland, religion and all the rest, I remember that Penny Rimbaud seemed particularly enthused when I asked about Crass' musical influences, and his references to John Cage and Stockhausen didn't surprise me one bit. The mainstream music press of the day always dismissed Crass as mindless three-chord thrash, but they actually had far more musical intelligence and imagination, with antecedents including modern classical, European atonality and free-form jazz.

More importantly, this trip to Dial House marked the beginning of a long and close friendship with the band, and I have to say that it didn't come as a shock to me when they decided to call it a day in 1984. Personal tensions between band members that had been long suppressed were beginning to surface, and I'd seen at first hand the toll that maintaining the public front of 'Crass' had begun to take on these individuals. The exhaustion and stress caused by constant surveillance and harassment by The State was only compounded by the role of 'leadership' placed upon them by an anarcho-punk following who clearly hadn't paid attention to the lyrics of *Where Next Columbus?*...

Penny, Gee and Steve continued to live at Dial House, although during the late 80s and 90s their priorities focussed on more personal struggles, particularly against land owners and property developers seemingly intent on encroaching into the last remaining green belt areas surrounding London. Over a decade later, this culminated in buying the previously rented house at auction, a decision which left them £100,000 in debt, but at last securing a stable future for what they describe as a 'centre for dynamic cultural change'.

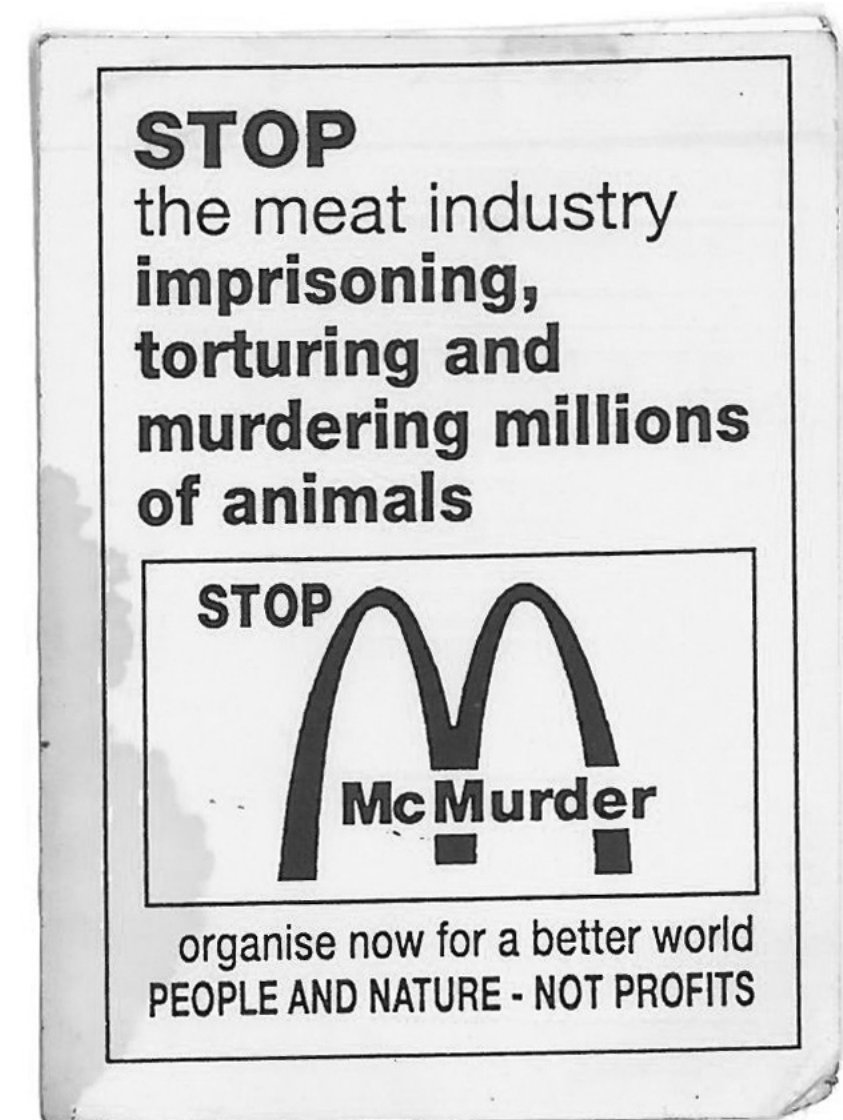
Since 2002 I've been running regular permaculture workshops at Dial House that have been attended by possibly hundreds of participants. Many have never heard of Crass (but we also attract a very high proportion of those who have...), but nearly all comment on the positive energy of the place.

Once past it's rickety little wooden gate it's easy to get lost for a while wandering amongst the vegetable plots, native tree plantings, fruit bushes and flower beds teeming with humming bees and birdsong, and the multitude of hidden shelters and sitting places adorned with sculptures and carvings. Turning each corner is a surprise – you never quite know what you will find.

Then there's the 17th century building itself, a crooked house maze of artist's studios, rehearsal rooms, libraries and social spaces. Some even describe it as 'Paradise'.

Certainly it can be an asylum from the madness that is early 21st century fossil fuel and war driven 'civilisation'.

Much of what Crass dealt with as a band was dark and frightening, particularly towards the end, in the period that followed the Falklands War, when it became clear just how far The State would go in order to protect its power. But despite this their message was always essentially positive; that behind the ugliness, brutality and violence that we are expected to accept as normality there lies the rarely glimpsed beauty, creativity and barely fathomed potential of the human spirit. Crass never used the word permaculture, but their vision of an alternative to a society which is anything but earthright and sustainable, and where we can all live fulfilled lives in harmony with nature's patterns, struck a chord with many people that I've since met within world-change movements. Diggers, dreamers, 'New Age' travellers, road protesters, animal rights campaigners, self-builders, anti-globalisation activists and permaculture designers – there is a generation out there who one way or another drew inspiration from their central message that 'There Is No Authority But Yourself'.



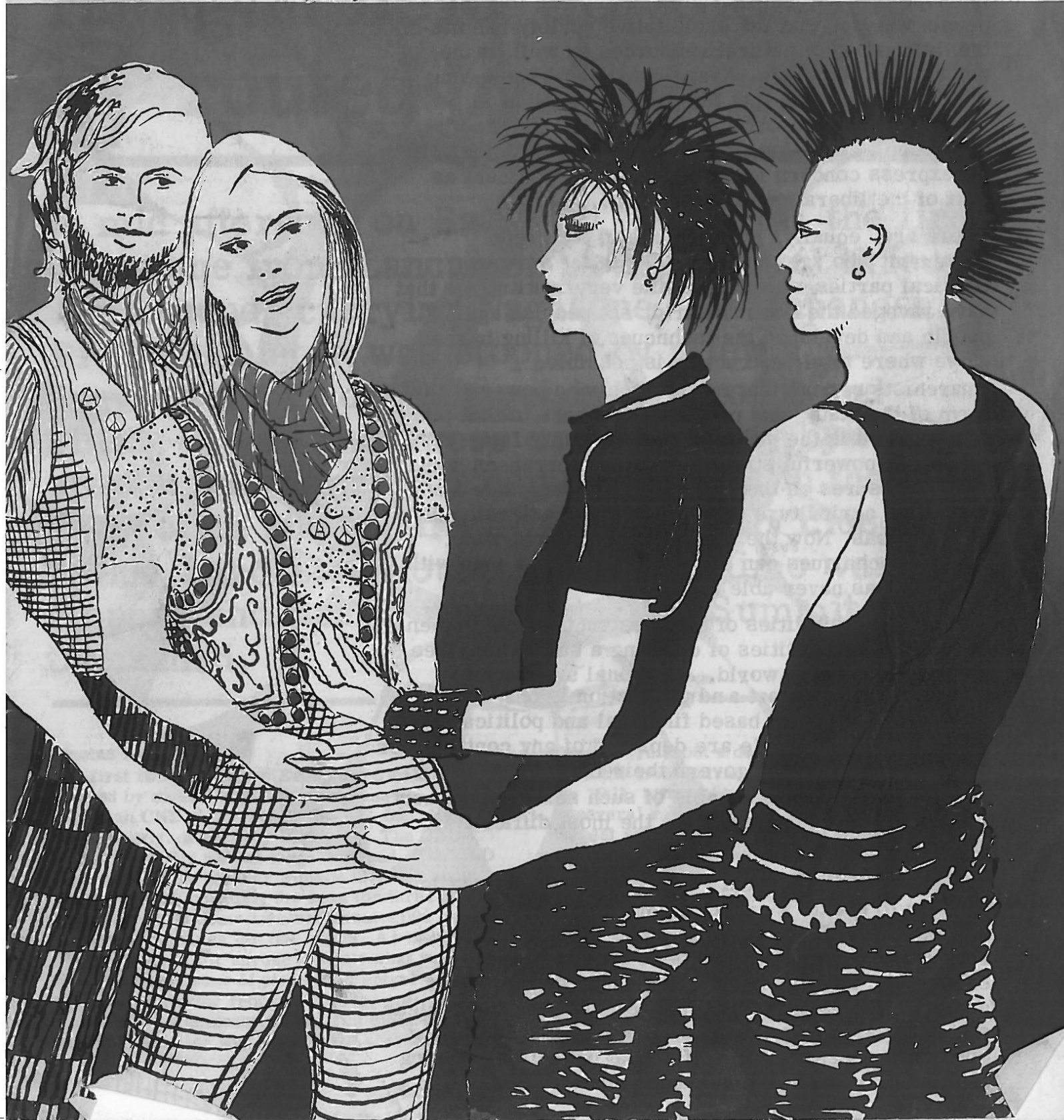


# GRASS ANARCHIST

JUL-AUG 30p

The enemies of the people are those who know what people need

**No.1 SUMMIT BLOCKADED: THE CONVOY:  
LONDON GREENPEACE: POISON GIRLS GIG:  
COLIN WARD:**



12 PM. At home, by myself, following an evening of drinking at the pub. I've had 4 or 5 pints, and am certainly feeling the effects. I sit on a cushion and put on a tape - "The War Inside our Heads" by Danbert Nobacon. The words fill me with thoughts that blend badly with the alcohol: Sadness, depression....

"Fear destroys our faith in ourselves, Fear destroys our faith in each other, Fear destroys our inclination to be with one another, Fear will leave us paralysed, stop us looking in each other's eyes, Prevent us talking to each other when it really matters, Fear becomes our character, Fear becomes our means of exchange, Makes us want to kick fuck out of each other, We're divided and ruled...."

Beercans, empty save for yesterday's fagbutts, lie about on the floor. A plate, smeared with the dried remains of this evening's dinner, sits upon the table. Cold baked beans, tomato sauce, grease.

Sometimes I feel so alone.

I've written endless tirades against "The System" - Pages and Pages and Pages, Pamphlets, handouts, songs, slogans, leaflets, cassette covers, letters denouncing Thatcher, War, Reagan, butchers, vivisection, Thorne EMI, Rio Tinto Zinc, Union Carbide, MacDonalds, The Police, Rich Scum, fascists, South Africa.... An endless list of "Them" - I stand by it all, but when I'm alone at night I still want to cry sometimes, just for myself. Sometimes I wish there were someone beside me, to whom I could reach out and touch, and every thing would be alright. Sometimes I want to hug those around me and tell them that I care about them, to remind myself and each other of our fragility, our humanity. It is being denied to us, not only by "Them", but by ourselves.

WORDS: SEPTEMBER 1985. ART: DECEMBER 1989



# • THIRD WORLD WAR •

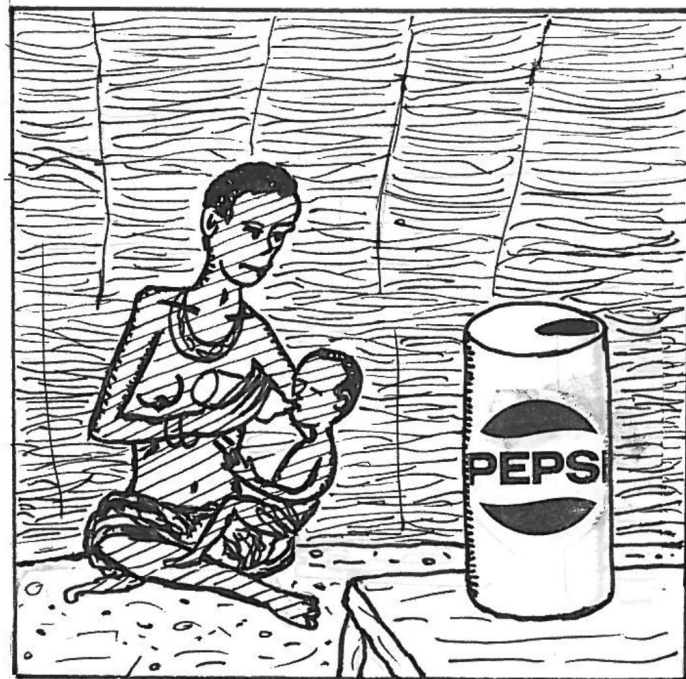
WRITTEN & DRAWN BY G. BURNETT, 1993.



Michael Jackson's 1992 'Heal The World' tour was dedicated to "All the voiceless children of the world". One of his biggest sponsors is the multi-national soft drinks giant 'PepsiCo'.....



As well as earning Bob Geldof a knighthood, 1985's 'Live Aid' & 'Band Aid' projects raised £80,000,000 for famine relief - about what the world spends on arms every 2½ hours, or slightly less than Michael Jackson's personal amassed fortune.....



In the 'Third World', irresponsible marketing by multi-national corporations encourages mothers to believe that soft drinks are the best thing they can give their babies. This exacerbates the problems of malnutrition amongst the very young.....



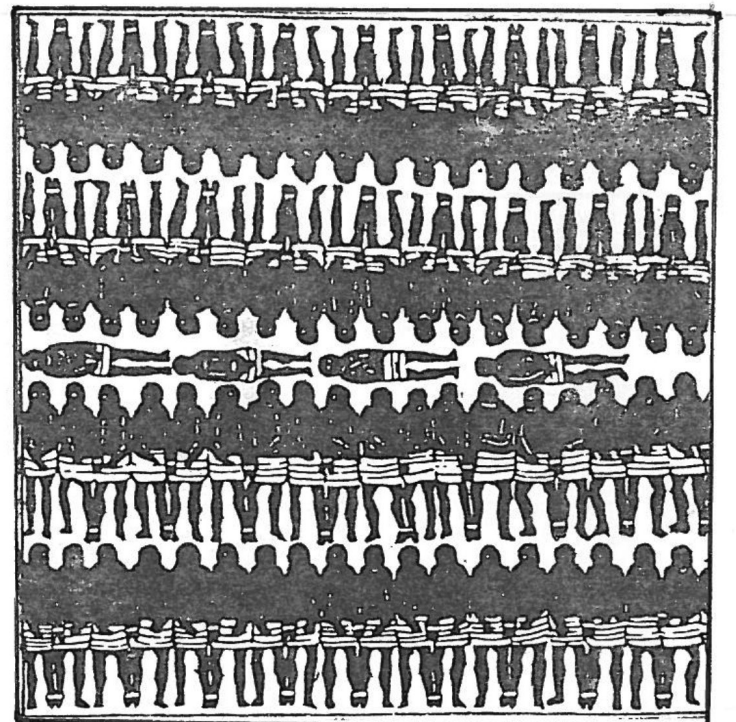
Over 1/3rd of the world's grain harvest is used as cattle-feed, yet meat is largely a Western luxury. It was noted that at 'Live Aid' there were few vegetarian refreshment alternatives to burger stands. Despite the money raised, such events fail to make crucial connections....



Djibril Diallo, spokesperson, UN office for emergency operations, 1984-86 addressed the fundamental and inherent racism of such charity projects, and of how the media portrays images of Africa as "The international beggars, waiting, begging bowl in hand, for outsiders to come in and rescue them...."



The debt crisis has its origins in the early 70's, when the newly rich oil producing nations deposited their wealth into Western banks, who re-lent vast sums to countries in Central America, Asia and Africa. Much of this money was used by corrupt dictatorships for self-serving investments, siphoned into personal accounts or used to buy arms for internal repression, rather than for projects to benefit their populations.....

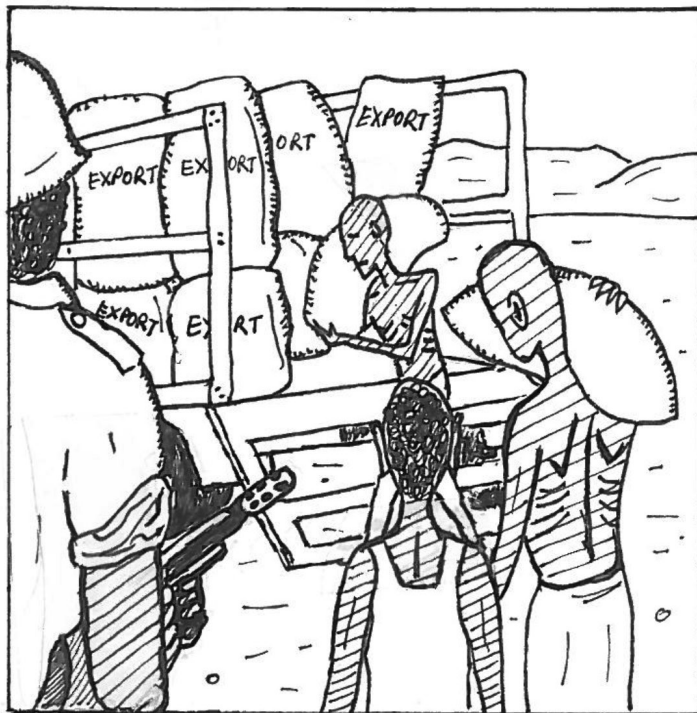


Even more fundamentally, the concept of 'Aid' ignores the fact that the poverty afflicting the 'Third World' has its roots in Western imperialism and colonialism, and in the historical conception of these lands as being nothing more than commodities to be plundered for their resources and slave labour. Today old-style imperialism is all but dead. But economic neo-colonialism is very much alive...

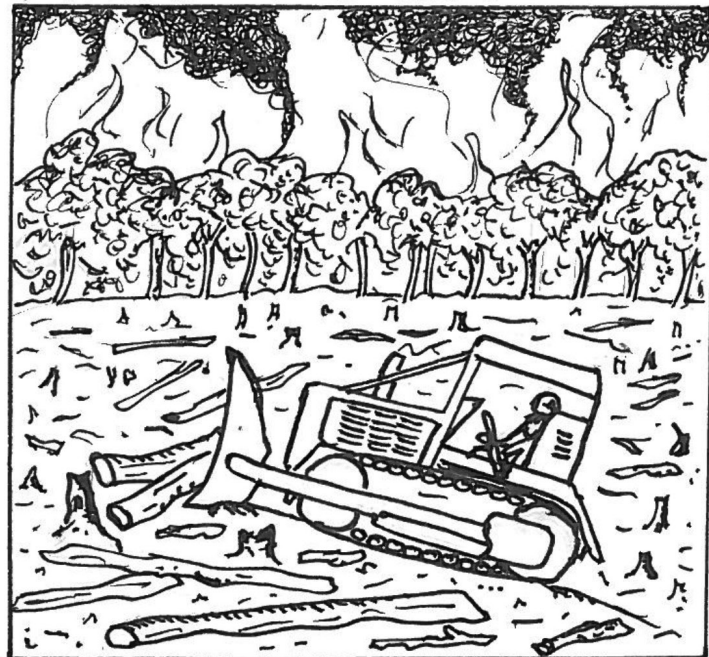


In their greed, the major American & European banks lent far more than they actually held in their reserves. When in 1982 Mexico was no longer able to meet its repayments, the world economic system threatened to collapse. The banks, through the International Monetary Fund, made further loans so that 'Third World' countries could continue to keep up payments, thus creating a vicious spiral. Third World debt currently stands at around \$1,300 Billion....

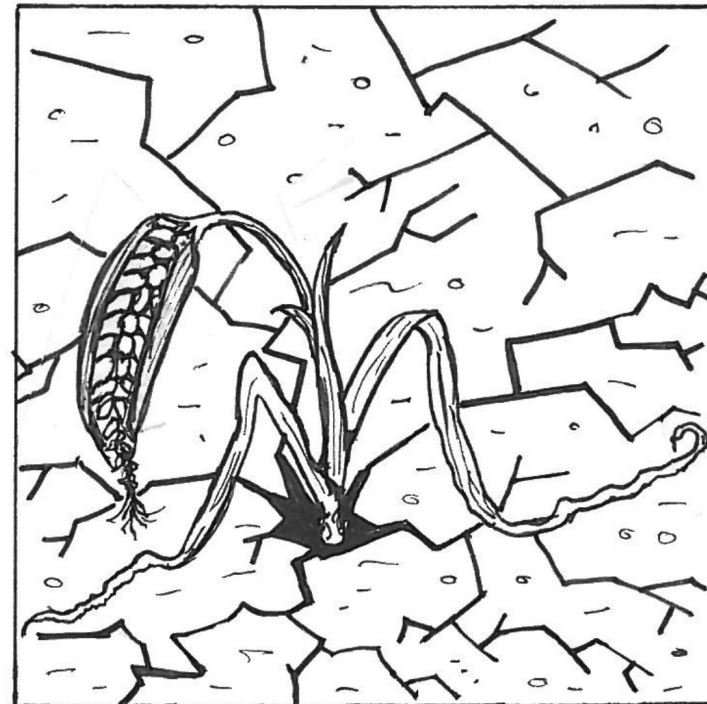




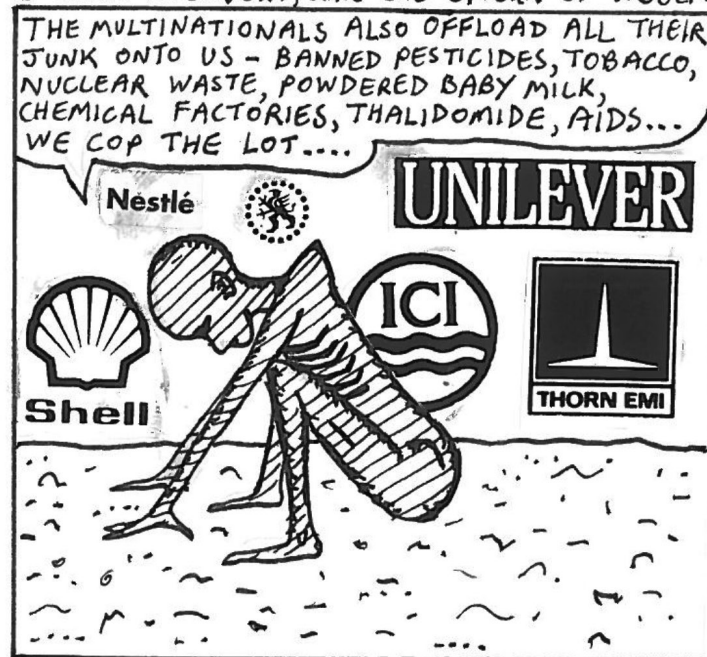
IMF 'austerity measures' mean that in order to meet crippling debt repayments, 'Third World' governments have sacrificed their own economies. Land that could be used to feed the people is used to produce cash crops such as tea, coffee, sugar, rubber, cotton, cocoa, grain for cattle-feed, exotic fruits, etc. Effectively, the indigenous and peasant populations of Latin America, Asia and Africa are dispossessed from their own soil.....



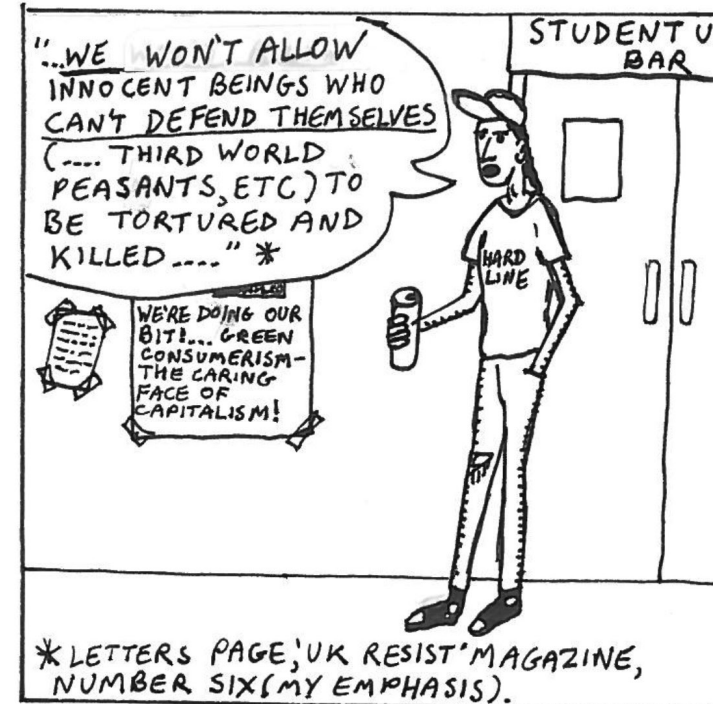
As the debt crisis spirals, the need for land to grow export crops increases. This leads to the destruction of forest cover for short-term agricultural use. Ethiopia once had 40% forest cover - today only 2% remains. It has been stated that unless the countries which hold the vast amount of rainforest receive serious debt relief within the next few years, there is no chance of saving those forests.....



Agribusiness further compounds the problem. Farmers often have no choice but to buy genetically engineered seeds supplied by the Multi-National Corporations. These often have low disease resistance, or are not suited to the environmental conditions, and require specialized chemical fertilizers, weed killers and equipment to make them successfully grow. Unecological farming practices and the overuse of land soon leads to the creation of barren and sterile dustbowl, and the spread of deserts...



The Debt Crisis is but one manifestation of how the Southern Hemisphere is exploited by Western governments, banks and Multinationals for its resources, cheap labour and land. The costs are ecological devastation, poverty, disease, starvation and cultural decimation. Far from providing 'aid', the 'First World' is in fact grossly subsidised by the 'Third World'.....



\*LETTERS PAGE, UK RESIST MAGAZINE, NUMBER SIX (MY EMPHASIS).

Yet the ideology of 'Aid' continues to perpetuate the myths that Famine and Poverty are due to 'Natural Disasters' or 'Ignorance' - 'Drought', 'Overpopulation' or 'Inefficient Farming Practices' are blamed... Even amongst the so-called 'Radical' community, the racist, Eurocentric conception that 'Third World' peoples are passive victims, helplessly dependant upon Western philanthropy often still creeps through the 'Right-On' Veneer.....



All over Latin America, Asia and Africa, self-help groups and co-operatives are springing up and spreading out. People are taking action to develop projects to provide themselves and each other with food, clean water, and shelter. Through mutual aid, skill sharing and the use of low level technology appropriate to their environments, people are creating health and education centres, forming trade-unions and land co-ops - reclaiming dignity and taking back what is theirs.....



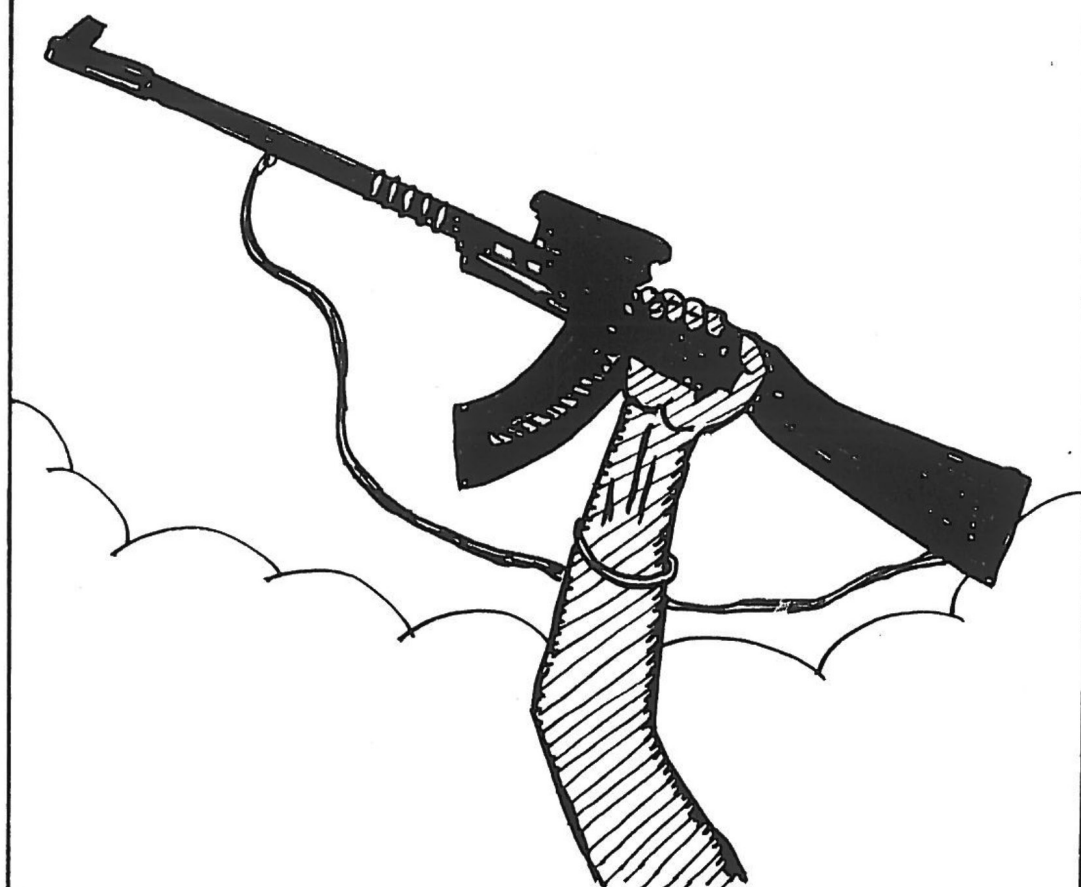
In fact the strength and resourcefulness of 'Third World' peoples almost staggers belief... Just staying alive requires tremendous effort when people are dispossessed of land, resources and power... The poor regularly travel long distances to find work, and often labour 10-14 hours a day. Women in rural Asia and Africa walk several miles a day to collect water and firewood.... If the poor were truly passive, few could even survive.....



What the 'Third World' needs isn't so much Western 'Aid', as for the West to get off their backs. What we can do is educate ourselves, then help to dispel the myths and clichés. We can support initiatives for real change, and say 'No' to the Multinationals, banks and government interests. We can withdraw our labour, disinvest, boycott, take direct action... look for alternatives. Ultimately, the most effective way for us to help the 'Third World' is to organise within our own communities and campaign for a radical transformation of society on all levels...

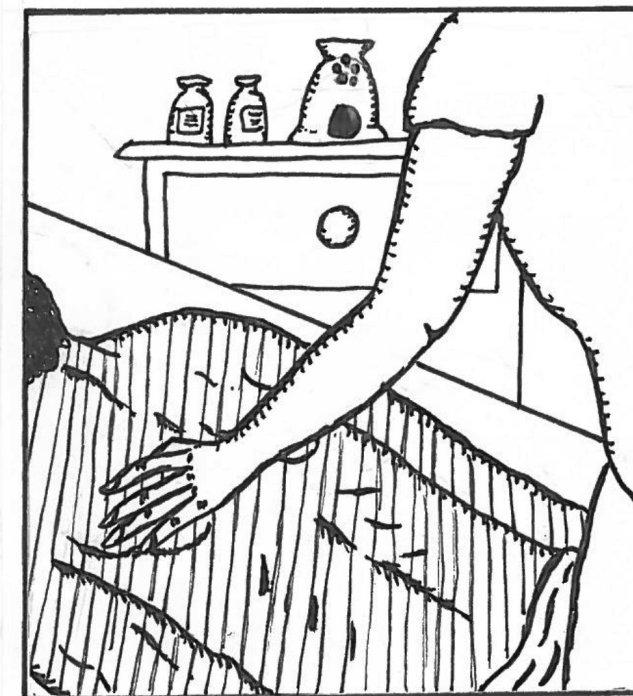


WESTERN MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS, BANKS AND GOVERNMENTS HAVE DECLARED WAR ON THE THIRD WORLD THROUGH THEIR ECONOMIC POLICIES AND EXPLOITATION .... THE FIGHT-BACK IS STARTING, LITTLE BY LITTLE .....



"AND WHEN THE SYSTEM STARTS TO CRACK, WE'LL HAVE TO BE READY TO GIVE IT ALL BACK...."

POSTSCRIPT: There are two basic tenets to bear in mind in the struggle for true freedom and justice; ① LAND IS LIBERTY!, and ② KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!... Arm yourself with information: 'New Internationalist' magazine (£1.50 from 42 Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford, OX1 2EP, England); 'Food: Need, Greed and Myopia', Geoffrey Yates, 'Earthright Books' ISBN 0-907367-04-6, 'Food For Beginners', Susan George & Nigel Paige, 'Readers & Writers Books' ISBN 0-906495-85-7; 'Dark Diamonds: Postcards From The Haunted Bazaar', Andrew Cocker (£1.00 + SAE from 1, St Johns View, Boston Spa, Wetherby, West Yorks LS23 6NQ); 'How The Other Half Dies' - Susan George, 'Penguin Books' ISBN 0-14-022001-1; 'A Fate Worse Than Debt' - BBC 2 TV documentary, 1989, written & narrated by Susan George: Write & demand a repeat screening; 'Pictures Of Starving Children Sell Records', Chumbawamba, LP, 'Agit-Prop' records; 'The Debt Crisis' - London Greenpeace Factsheet (S, Caledonian Road, London, N1, England); 'Third World War, Book 1', Pat Mills & Carlos Ezquerro (Fleetway Publications) - despite criticism from many quarters, one of the very few 'comics' with something to say - demand a 'graphic novel' reprint; 'Abundant Living In The Coming Age Of The Tree', Kathleen Jannaway (£1.50 + SAE from 47, Highlands Rd, Leatherhead, Surrey); 'Whose Starving Them?' Richard Hunt, (Green Anarchist pamphlet, Box H, Cowley Rd, Oxford). Apologies to everyone plagiarised & ripped off - don't bother suing - I'm broke too! Thanks to Nath, Sheena & Graeme.

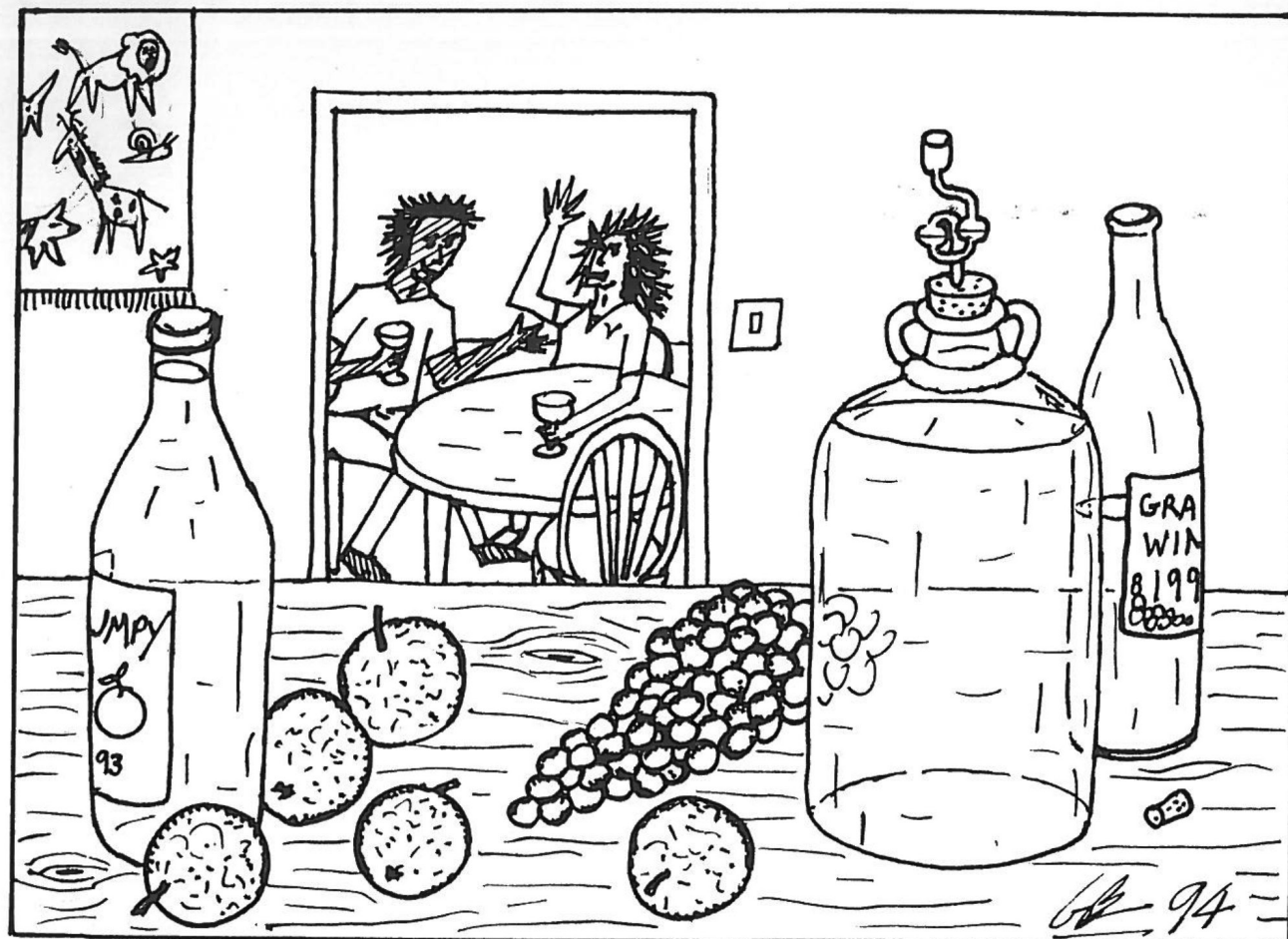


**LETS  
work together!**









Winemaking' and 'Home Brewed Beers and Stouts' (both Amateur Winemaker publications) are pretty much the 'bibles' for the home-based alcohol producer.

I'd advise using white sugar for the recipes below - brown sugars can cause discolouration and taint the flavour. You might also like to note my comments on sugar at the start of the section on 'Sweet Dishes' - it is possible however to produce some alcoholic drinks without using additional sugar to that found in the fruit (eg, grape wine and cider). Also note that all equipment used in wine/beer, etc making should be kept clean and sterile to avoid contamination by tainting, or even potentially poisonous, bacteria.

### ELDERBERRY WINE

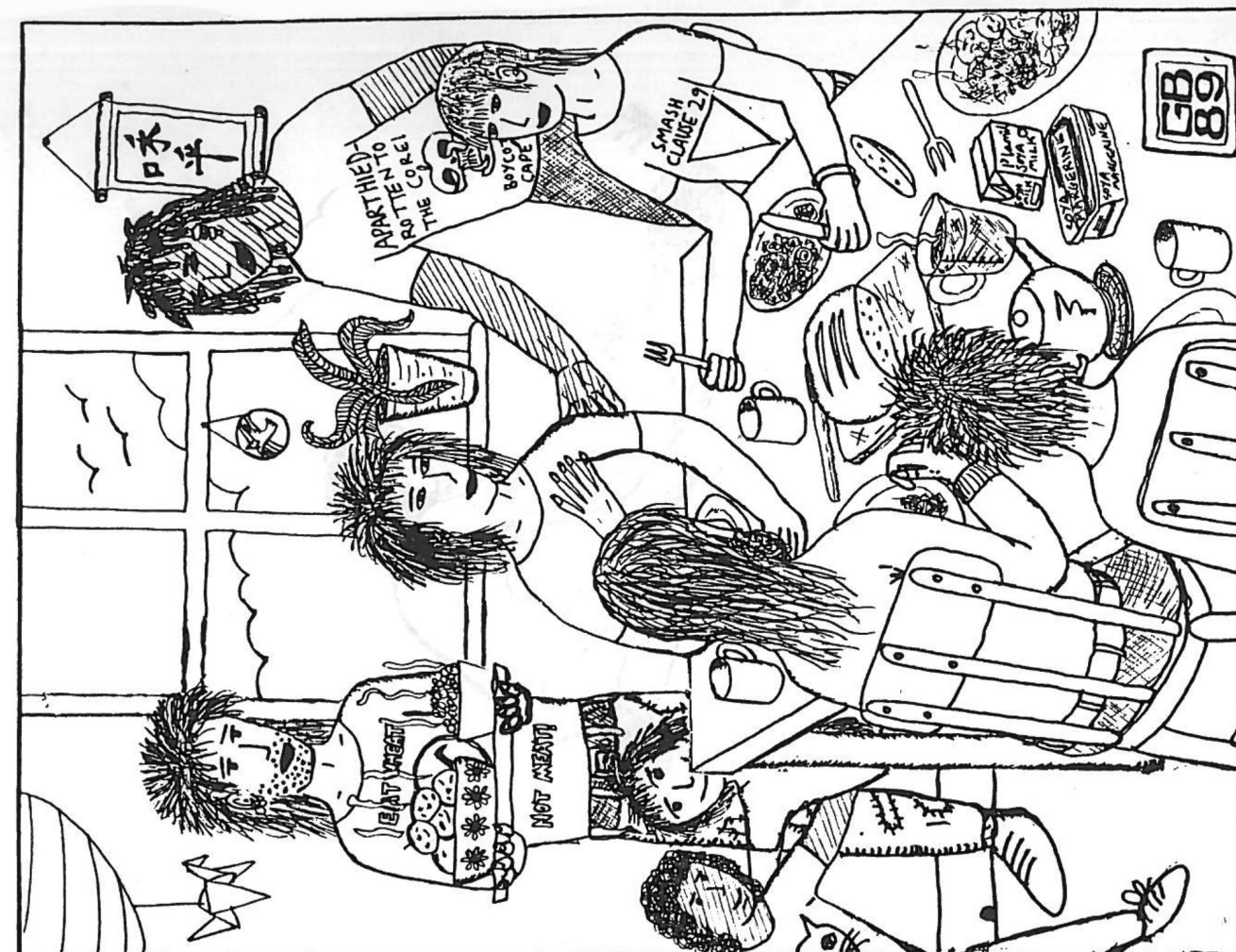
3lb ripe, washed elderberries

3½lb sugar

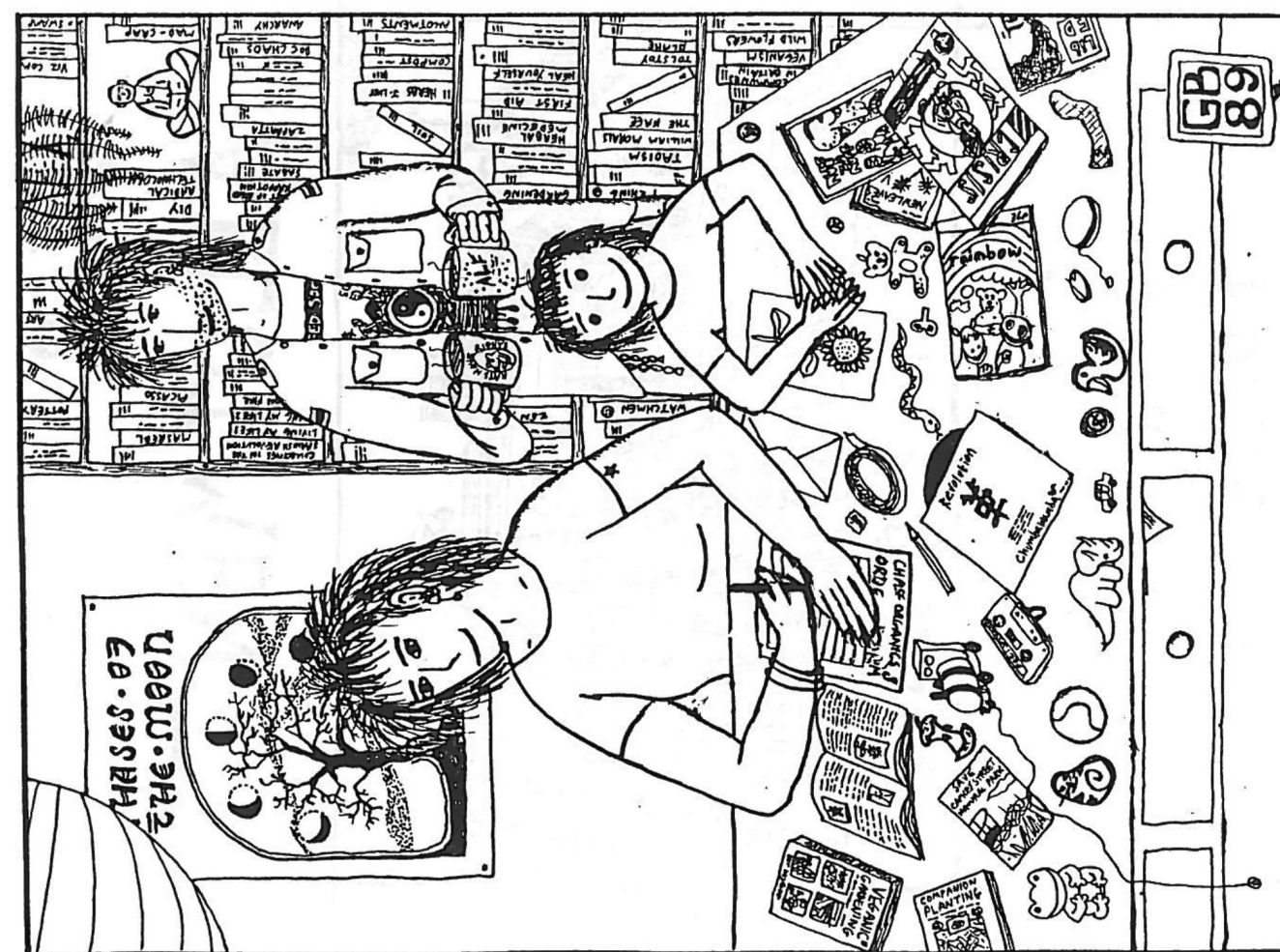
1 gallon water

Yeast and nutrient (available from 'home brew' shops)

Mash up the berries in a bowl. Boil the water and pour over the crushed berries. When cooled to about luke-

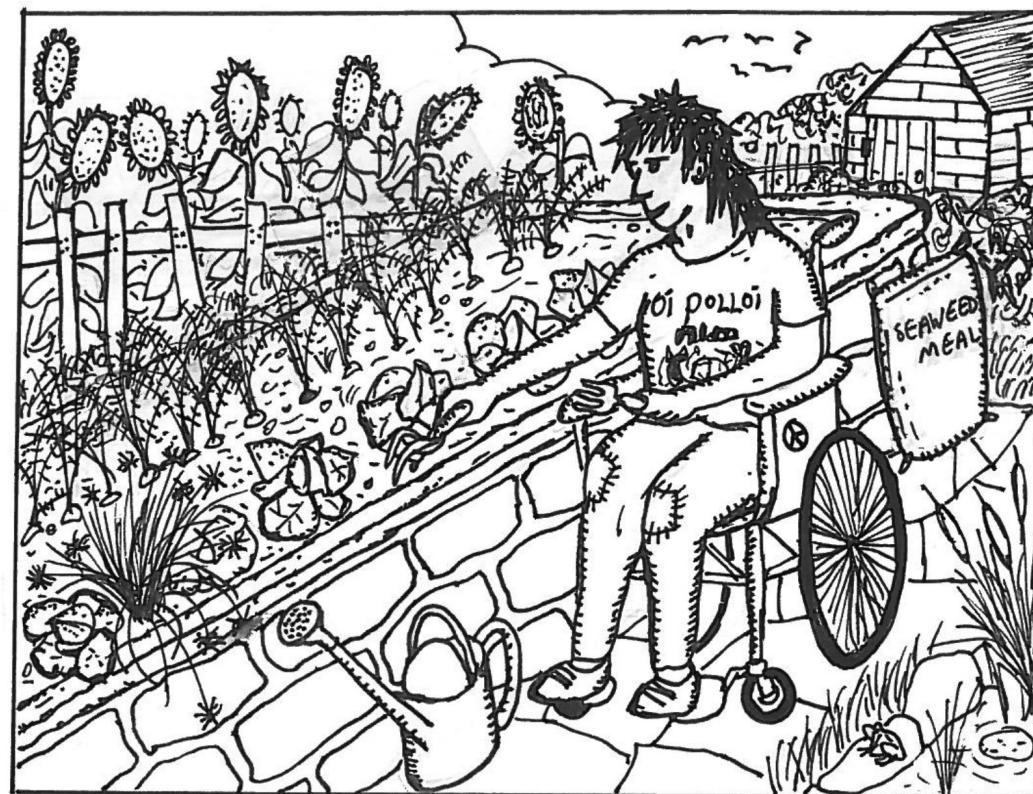


... ENOUGH FOR ALL OUR FRIENDS!



DON'T FORGET TO ORDER SUNFLOWERS!

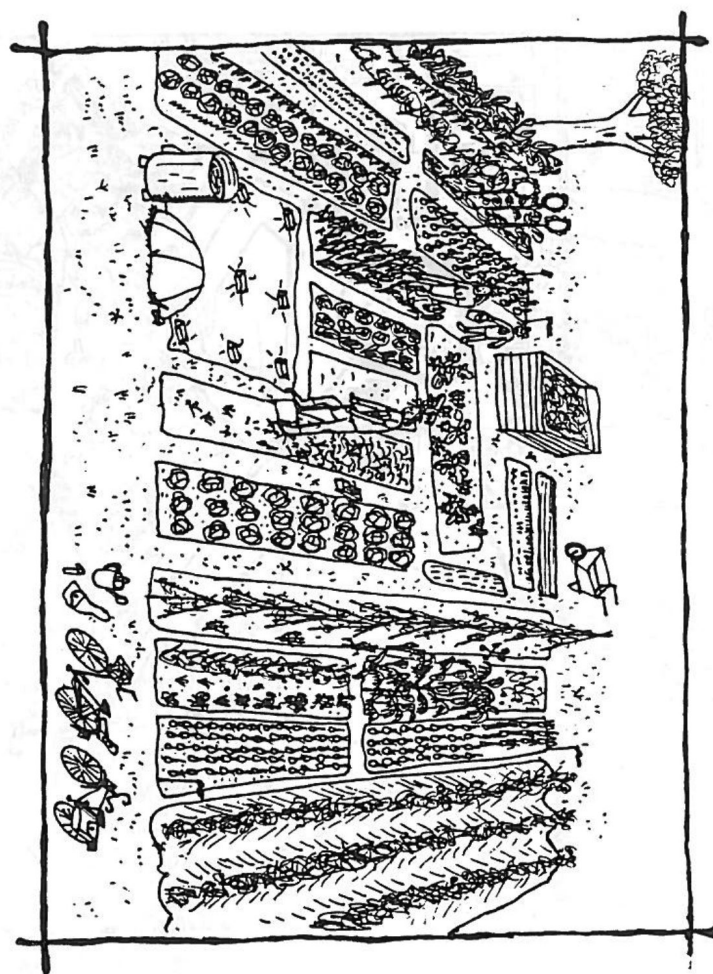




is being built. A heap should consist of layers of organic materials such as Kitchen wastes (outer cabbage leaves, tea bags, vegetable skins, potato peelings, etc), weeds, prunings (if possible shred them first), straw, potato, tomato and bean haulms and so on, mixed with smaller quantities of grass mowings to aid activation and a little lime to counteract acidity. Urine is also high in nitrogen, and can be added instead of (or as well as) grass mowings as an activator. In a matter of a few hours your heap should be too hot for you to comfortably insert your hand into its centre - This means it is 'active'! Turn it over regularly, and the books say it will be good, friable compost in as little as 6 weeks in summer, although my experience has been that at least 6 months is a far more realistic time scale! You can never get enough compost, so its use must be planned economically. The bulk should be liberally added to your potato trenches as this crop particularly benefits from its application. If you are following the rotation scheme described below this will mean that the whole of your growing area will receive a thorough application once every 4 years at least.

It is good, basic practice to rotate the 4 main categories of crops, these being potatoes; brassicas (cabbages, brussels sprouts, broccoli, cauliflowers, etc, also radishes, turnips and tomatoes); roots (beetroots, carrots, parsnips, chard, onions & family, also lettuce); legumes (peas and beans). Crop rotation prevents the build-up of soil-borne diseases such as eelworm or clubroot, also the food requirements of the different groups are varied. Crop rotation schemes give all the vegetables that you are growing a chance to obtain the best from your soil. Potatoes and the brassicas are very heavy feeders, and require plenty of moisture-

## • OUR ALLOTMENT •



• BY  
GRAHAM  
BURNETT •



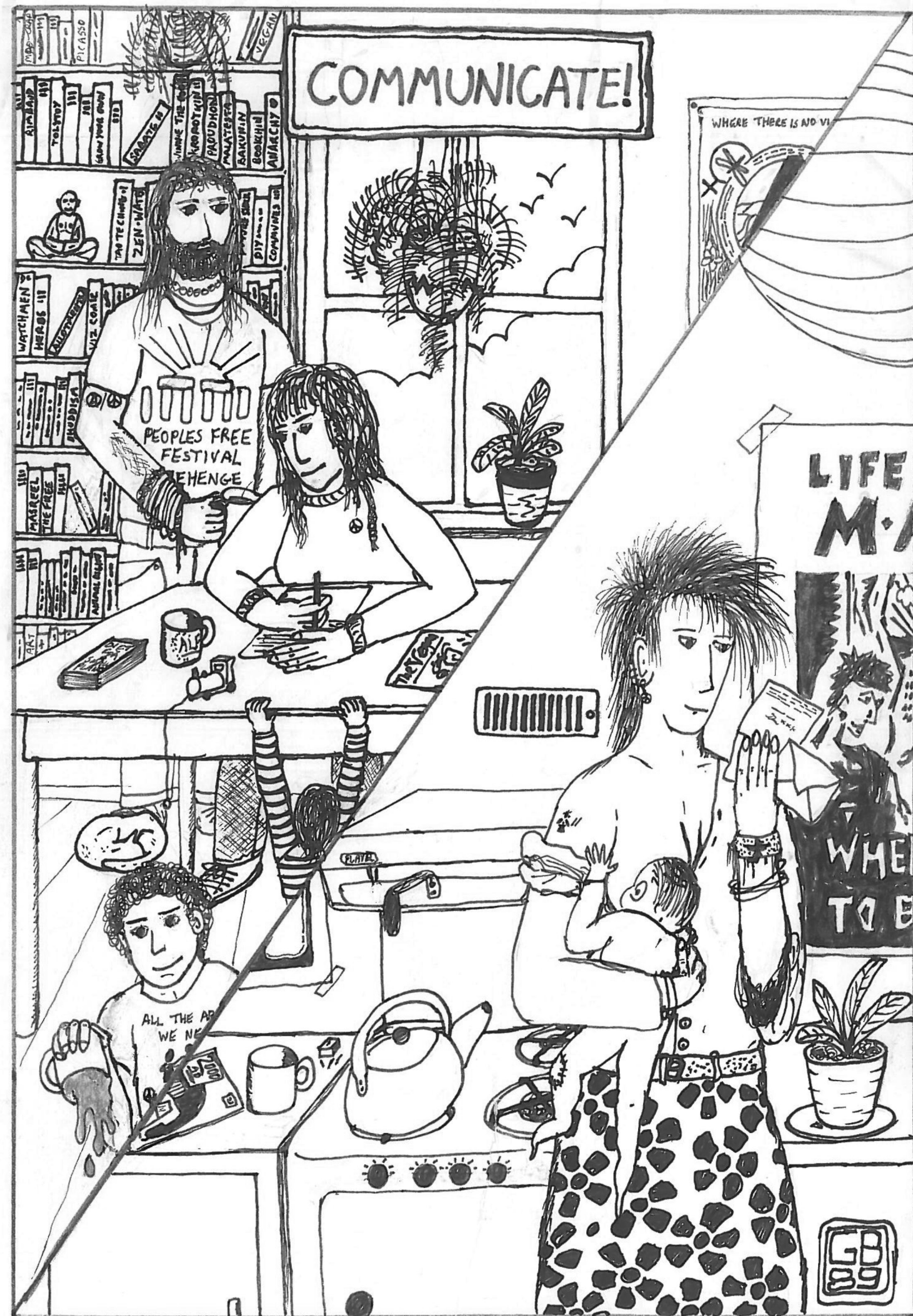




in Autumn, preferably after a frost. Although too sour for the palate of most, steeped in gin with half their weight of sugar for 2 or 3 months they produce Sloe gin, a delicious and potent liqueur that should be ready in time for the Solstice or Christmas festivities! Rosehips are very high in Vitamin C, and in fact became the countries primary source when citrus fruit became hard to obtain during World War Two. Elderberries can be made into jelly, or added to fruit jams such as apple or blackberry. They also make a red wine (see page 30) but don't eat elderberries raw - they are a powerful emetic. The flowers of the elder can also be made into a refreshing non-alcoholic summer 'champagne' drink by steeping them in diluted apple juice. There are many other wild fruits and berries native or naturalised to the British Isles - crab apple, rowan, bullace, hawthorn, wild strawberry and cherry, blackcurrant, cloud berry. Their uses are worth investigating.

#### NUTS

The only problem with gathering nuts is that you have to be quick to beat the Squirrels! Chestnuts are traditionally roasted on open fires, but also make a delicious, rich nut roast especially suitable for the festive season (experiment with the recipe on page 5). Don't confuse them with horse-chestnuts (conkers), which are totally unrelated and inedible. Hazel or cob-nut trees are often found in hedgerows or as an understorey in oakwood. Nuts can be gathered around September, and have 50% more protein content weight for weight than hen's eggs. Acorns are largely overlooked as a food source, yet they are high in protein, fat and carbohydrate content. Their bitter tannin content must be removed by leaching (simmer for 10-15 minutes, change the water then simmer again) and they can be used in roasts (personally I find acorns rather glutinous in texture, therefore I'd recommend combining them 1 part to 3 of another, 'lighter' nut), in cookies and cakes, ground to a flour or as a coffee substitute. A leaflet giving more information on acorns and their use as a food is available for an SAE + a small donation from the Movement For Compassionate Living (for address see page 45). Beechmast is also edible,





Demonstrators campaign against sale of furs

# PROTESTERS STAGE SIT-IN AT STORE

BED AND BREAKFAST BACK-  
LASH IN LUTON

In response to the new DHSS bed and breakfast regulations which have made many young people homeless, a B&B Claimants Action Group was set up to organise resistance.

The campaign started with over 40 people staging a sit-in at the local DHSS. After a couple of hours we were removed by the police. The manager who came in for quite a bit of stick, later complained to the Press 'We tried to find a spokesperson but they assured us they were all there as individuals.'

Three council meetings have been disrupted, highlights including a Tory having a plastic bag put over his head, and a Labour councillor getting smacked in the face for calling a protestor 'a mouthy little bitch'. Unfortunately, at the third meeting, which ended with cuffs and flying cups of tea, one person was arrested and charged with assaulting a Liberal councillor. Council meetings now take place under police protection.

After somebody was arrested for sticking her fingers up at Prince Charles during a visit to Luton, a group of us went to the local BBC Radio offices and got them to broadcast a short interview saying why we opposed spending £50,000 on wining and dining the Royal parasite.

Other activities have included a sit-in at the local Anglia TV office, during which a life size cardboard cut-out of TV Adam Dalgleish was removed and displayed outside with a 'No Dole Cuts' banner round its neck, and leafletting DHSS workers to persuade them not to co-operate with the government offensive against the unemployed.

To contact anarchists in Luton write to:  
Box 33, Guildford Street, Luton  
Mail Address Only).

**MORE than 30 animal rights demonstrators, some of them self-confessed anarchists, staged a sit down protest in Luton's biggest department store.**

**The animal rights campaigners were protesting at the sale of furs and leather in Debenhams in the Arndale Centre.**

Police were called to eject the protesters from the Michael Taub Skin Shop in Debenhams on Saturday.

The demonstrators, mainly young people, chanted slogans and handed out leaflets during the 20 minute protest and refused requests by Debenhams management to leave. There were no arrests.

Earlier, quick-thinking staff at a women's clothes shop, Peter Richards, also in the Arndale had foiled the protesters' plans to stage a sit down there, by locking the doors.

A spokesman for the demonstrators, who claim not to be organised into a formal group, warned after the sit down that they would be taking more action in the future.

"Fur coats and leather clothes mean killing animals to satisfy human vanity. We wanted to make our point to the public," said a spokeswoman, who refused to give her name.

"We will be taking more action if we do not get a change of policy in shops like Debenhams and Peter Richards," she added.

The sit-down protest lasted more than a quarter-of-an-hour before five police officers escorted the protesters, some dressed as animals, from Debenhams.

While the sit-in took place, shoppers were prevented from buying clothes from the Michael Taub "shop within a shop" which rents space from Debenhams.

Shoppers were met with a barrage of shouts and the protesters chanted: "One struggle, one fight, human freedom, animal rights" and "fur trade out".

Mr. Graham Cohen, general manager of Debenhams in Luton, was shouted down when he tried to ask the demonstrators to



A protester hides behind a mask.

furs and leather were due to be removed from the shop at the end of a closing down sale next Saturday.

He said: "If the protesters want to express a view then it would be more helpful for them to do so by putting it in writing to our head office rather than disrupt the store."

Mr. Cohen said he did not know if furs and leather would be back in the store in the autumn. Earlier one of his staff said that they would.

"We have a customer relations department and they will be willing to look at any genuine views which our customers put forward."

"But we do sell what the company wants and at the moment, in line with company policy, that includes furs and leather," added Mr. Cohen.

Both the Debenhams manager and manageress of Peter Richards said they had no comment to make on the protesters anti-fur trade views.



Police try to remove the demonstrators from Debenhams store in the Arndale Centre

Hyper-Active as the Day is Long

HYPER-ACTIVE AS THE DAY IS LONG  
— ANARCHO-PUNK ACTIVISM IN AN  
ENGLISH TOWN, 1984-86

Neil Transpoutine

I'd had the Crass records, the Conflict badges, and a mohican, I'd been on a Stop the City demo too, but my real initiation into the world of 'anarcho punk activism' didn't come until September 1<sup>st</sup> 1984 when I went to a Hunt Saboteurs benefit gig at Luton library theatre. Headliners Antisect from Northampton were one of the more metal tinged punk outfits, with heavy guitar riffs and gruff vocals growling "why must I die?" (The "I" in question being a laboratory animal of course).

If the extremism of noise and content was impressive it wasn't unexpected. What really amazed me was what was going on off the stage. I'd been to loads of gigs where I'd steamed in with my mates, bought some drinks, watched the bands, and left with the only interaction with others being some slam dancing at the front. Here there were people talking, and busy bookstalls from the Hunt Saboteurs and from Housman's, the London radical bookshop, with a selection of anarchist papers and other publications (I later found out that several people from the Luton scene were working the odd shift there, and eventually I did the same myself).

I chatted with someone about hunt sabbing and within a week I was standing in a field in Northamptonshire at 8am in the morning at the beginning of the fox cub hunting season. It was the start of a couple of years of intense activism, with countless hours spent in the back of a white van hurtling between punk gigs, hunts, demonstrations and protests.

Of course these were tumultuous times across the world – the days of Thatcher vs. the miners, of Reagan and the new Cold War, of uprisings against Apartheid in South Africa. And in towns and cities across the UK, some of the most determined opposition to the state of the world came from groups of young, invariably black-clad punks. This article is a snapshot of one of those scenes, in Luton, but similar stories could be told about many other places.

**Punk in Luton**

Thirty miles north of London, Luton in the mid-1980s was still an industrial town dominated by the Vauxhall car factory, as it was to remain until General Motors stopped making cars there in 2002. There had been a punk scene in the area since the early days: The Damned played one of their first gigs at Luton's Royal Hotel in 1976 and the Sex Pistols played at the Queensway Hall in neighbouring Dunstable in the same year. Luton's first punk band, The Jets, featured on the famous *Live at the Roxy* album in '77.

The best known punk band to come from Luton was UK Decay, formed in 1979. The band had some association with Crass – in December 1979 they played with Crass and Poison Girls at a gig in a tin Nissan hut at Marsh Farm in Luton, and their final record – the *Rising from the Dread* EP – was released on Crass's Corpus Christi label in 1982. But while UK Decay released the great anti-war track *For My Country*,



they weren't really part of that anarcho-punk protest scene as such. Along with Northampton's Bauhaus they were developing a proto-goth aesthetic, referencing horror themes and plundering Edgar Allen Poe and Herman Hesse for inspiration. Indeed the reference to them as "*the face of punk gothique*" by Steve Keaton in *Sounds* (February 1981) is credited as being one of the originators of the term 'goth' for this emerging sound.

UK Decay were influential stalwarts of the indie charts, and among other things supported Dead Kennedys on their 1980 UK tour. For a while they were involved in a short lived punk/new wave record shop in Luton town centre, Matrix, which closed down shortly after a party where the Kennedys and other party goers ran amok in the Arndale Centre car park.

By 1984 UK Decay had split up, giving rise to a couple of splinter bands (Furyo and In Excelsis) and the post-punk scene too had begun to fragment. The town's subcultural outcasts tended to congregate at one pub in particular – The Blockers Arms in High Town Road. A hostile local historian has written that "*During the late 1970s and early 1980s, the pub became a Mecca for some of the undesirable elements of Luton society, it being reported that the pub was used by drug-peddlers, with the result that there was much trouble with fights and under-age drinking*" (Stuart Smith, *Pubs and Pints: the story of Luton's Public Houses and Breweries*, Dunstable: Book Castle, 1995). Most of this is true, but of course we all thought we were very desirable.

The various micro-tribes of punks, psychobillies and bikers were united in their alienation from mainstream Luton nightlife, whilst suspicious of each other, sometimes to the point of violence. The bikers dominated the pool table and the dealing. The traditional charity bottle on the bar read 'support your local Hells Angels', and you really didn't want to argue with them. Skinheads would turn up looking for a fight, throwing around glasses. Among the punks there were different factions, albeit overlapping and coexisting peacefully – some slightly older first generation punks, early goths, what would later be called indie kids, and 'anarcho-punks'.

There were no strict borders between these groups – every individual had their own combination of politics, music tastes and hairstyles – so it's perhaps misleading to talk of a discrete, separate anarcho-punk scene. But within this continuum there was a definite current that was more overtly political and musically more into the bands like Crass and Conflict.

I don't think most people like this would have defined themselves then as anarcho-punks or even necessarily as anarchists, but there was a shared, loose anti-authoritarian politics, with a strong focus on being against war and militarism and for animal rights. People were typically vegan at a time when supermarkets barely catered for vegetarians – these were the days of homemade houmous.

It would be misleading too to use the term 'Crass punks'. Crass had certainly been very influential earlier on but they were coming to the end of their active life, playing their final gig in 1984 – a miners' benefit in Aberdare. At the thrashier end of things Conflict were now the most influential band, but the scene had become much more

musically diverse. Bands like Chumbawamba with their harmonies, Slave Dance with their situationist squat funk sound, and No Defences with their tricky time signatures were a long way from being Crass or Conflict copyists.

In Luton, the house band of the scene was Karma Sutra. They had been included on Conflict's 1984 Mortarhate compilation *Who? What? Why? When? Where?* with their track *It's our World Too* and were later to release an album *The Day Dreams of a Production Line Worker* on their own Paradoxical Records. Another Luton band on a similar wavelength, Dominant Patri, had already split up by 1984. The other main 'anarcho' band in the town was Penumbra Sigh, who formed I believe in 1985, and there were also liked minded bands in nearby towns, such as Medical Melodies in St Albans.

I sometimes operated the slide projector at gigs for Karma, and I occasionally turned up at their rehearsal space with my wasp synth – you can hear it on one of their demo tapes from the period. But mostly I just travelled around with them and others to gigs – squat gigs in London such as in the Ambulance Station on the Old Kent Road, a pub in Brixton or a bus station by Kings Cross; gigs in far off places like a CND benefit supporting Chumbawamba in Stockport, gigs in nearby towns like Welwyn Garden City and St Albans; gigs with Conflict, Chumba, Antisect, The Seers, Blyth Power, Flowers in the Dustbin, Slave Dance, State Hate, No Defences, Brigandage, Black Mass, The McTells, The Astronauts and many more. But the music was only part of it and here I want to focus on some of the other things we got up to.

### Hunt Sabbing

*"It's normally a quiet Northamptonshire lane – but on this occasion it looks more like a battlefield. Furious members of the Grafton Hunt are blocking the road with their horses and refusing to move. Angry hunt saboteurs rev their cars, hoot their horns and demand that the horses get out of the way... A battered van and an assortment of old cars appeared and about 30 mainly young protesters dashed down a track close to the wood. A genuine Cotswold hunting horn, blown by a saboteur, did a good impression of the Grafton's rallying horn, while the rest of the party joined in with fake shouts and calls... There's another whirling confrontation and a young female saboteur is lying unconscious in a ploughed field – knocked flat by a horse... another saboteur is thrown into a stream by hunt followers, and there are more scuffles."* ('When the hunters become the hunted', Alex Dawson, *Chronicle and Echo*, September 10 1984).

The fine art of preventing hunters killing foxes and other animals dated back to the formation of the Hunt Saboteurs Association in 1963. Luton had been home to a particularly militant sabbing group in the early 1970s, from which emerged the Band of Mercy to take direct action including sabotaging hunt vehicles. This group, which included Ronnie Lee, was to become one of the founding cells of the Animal Liberation Front.

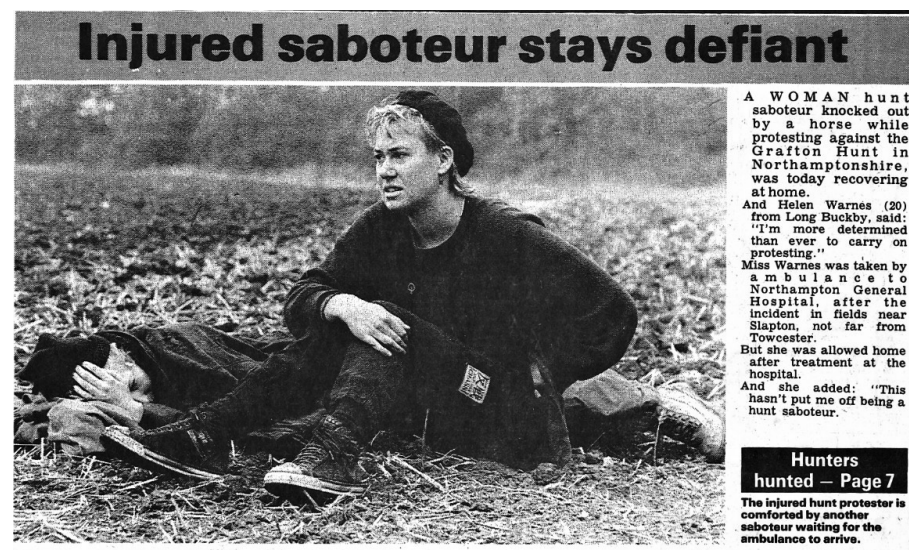
The mid-1980s Luton sabs operated across the Beds, Bucks, Herts and Northants countryside with occasional forays further afield. Our nearest fox hunt was the Enfield Chase, in pursuit of which we would head out of town having scoured *Horse and House* magazine for intelligence of where they were to be found of a Saturday morning.



We quite often went out with the Northampton group, sabbing the Pychley, Grafton or the Vale of Aylesbury fox hunts.. There was also a group in Bedford but even though there were some sound people in it we didn't entirely trust them because we suspected that their van driver had dubious fascist connections!

The biggest events were national and regional 'hits', when sab groups from across a wide area would converge on one hunt. Sometimes these would feature spectacular clashes, with red coated hunters on horseback, hunt followers, police and a hundred or more brightly haired sabs scuffling and chasing each other, and sometimes a fox, across fields and through woods. Ideally the hunt would be delayed by stopping it moving off, or blockading the kennels where the hounds were kept. At the start of the 1985 season for instance, around 100 sabs blockaded the kennels of the Cambridgeshire Foxhounds, preventing the van carrying the hounds from leaving on time.

At other times, sometimes with as much effect, it would just be a handful of us, hardly seeing the hunters but distracting the hounds from a distance blowing hunting horns or spraying anti-mate on the ground to obscure the scent of the fox. Whatever the numbers, the conflict was usually uneven, with the hunting cavalry facing the sabbing infantry. On my very first hunt, a sab was knocked out by a horse from the Grafton Hunt near Slapton in Northants. On another occasion I was knocked flying by a horse, but escaped injury. A few years later, in 1991, hunt saboteur Mike Hill was to be killed by a hunt vehicle used by the Cheshire Beagles (and indeed in 1995 Jill Phipps, who I remember meeting at that first hunt at Slapton, was killed by a lorry during an animal rights protest at Coventry airport).



The police generally turned a blind eye to any violence inflicted by hunt followers on sabs, and it was the latter who tended to get arrested if there were any clashes. For instance in March '85, eleven sabs were arrested as we tried to stop the Old Berkeley Beagles hunting hares near Thame in Oxfordshire. Sometimes the hunt could not be found at all, and there would be fruitless tours of country lanes in the back of a van. Where large numbers of sabs were gathered together with nothing to do the temptation to mischief elsewhere was strong. In March 1986, a big group of sabs who had originally gathered to oppose the Warwickshire hunt headed to

Leamington Spa town centre. After a sit down in McDonalds, they moved to a couple of local fur shops, *The Sunday Mercury* reported (16.3.1986): "A crowd of 70 demonstrators caused disturbances throughout the afternoon in the centre of Leamington. Some burst into Brians Specialist Furriers in Regent Street and grabbed expensive fur coats from racks before hurling them outside into the road." Twelve people were arrested including three from Luton, and a 'Leamington Dirty Dozen Defence Fund' was set up to support them.

On another occasion, in November 1986, Luton sabs headed off for a national hit near Leicester with around 150 sabs from Coventry, Leamington, Birmingham, Sheffield, Northampton, Rugby, Leicester and Lincoln. After chasing after the hunt, aided by CB radios, fog stopped play and the hunt went home early without a kill. The sabs headed into Leicester to join an anti-fur demo, with one of the Luton group being arrested for ABH after a scuffle during a sit in at a fur shop.

Not all sabs were punks of course, but our group was predominantly so, as were others. As well as the sabbing itself, keeping it going involved raising funds for van hire, petrol, materials and the occasional fine. Jumble sales and benefit gigs were the main source of income, including an amazing hunt sabs benefit we put on back at the Luton Library Theatre in 1985 with Chumbawamba, No Defences and Karma Sutra.

#### Vivisection

If sabbing was the weekly animal rights frontline, the stakes were higher in the other main area of contestation – vivisection. Here the opponents were not just a bunch of hunters on horseback (albeit sometimes rich and powerful people), but major multinational companies operating from high security laboratory complexes, a number of which were to be found in the local countryside.

One of the most significant was Unilever who had a research laboratory at Colworth House near Sharnbrook in Bedfordshire. In August 1984 a mass raid on the site was carried out by the Eastern Animal Liberation League, with around 200 people taking part. Doors were sledgehammered and a fence cut through with a stone cutter, with many files being removed for inspection later. Those involved had been told they had 30 minutes to get in and out before the police would arrive but 41 people were arrested in the surrounding area as they fled.

The Animal Liberation Leagues of that period represented an attempt to involve large numbers of people in mass direct action. Rather than the sabotage and rescuing of animals carried out by the ALF, the emphasis was intended to be on gathering evidence of cruelty in broad daylight. In one of the biggest raids, in April 1984, three hundred people took part in a Northern Animal Liberation League invasion of the ICI laboratories at Alderley Edge in Cheshire, followed a few months later by Unilever. Mass action of this kind obviously involved the risk of mass arrests, and serious conspiracy charges were laid against some of those arrested. The Unilever accused were tried in a series of three trials which concluded in June 1986 with 25 people being sentenced to a total of forty years in prison for conspiracy to burgle.



# LUTON ANIMAL RIGHTS First Public Meeting

Includes: SPEAKER FROM BRITISH UNION FOR  
ABOLITION OF VIVISECTION  
(BUAV.)

+ 2 VIDEOS INC. CONTROVERSIAL "PENNSYLVANIA PRIMATES"  
VIVISECTORS FILM.



ANIMAL RIGHTS STALLS + VEGAN FOOD AVAILABLE  
PLEASE COME!

Tues 10<sup>th</sup> December  
Friends Meeting House  
CRAWLEY GREEN ROAD, LUTON  
7.30pm. admission FREE

Another series of raids were carried out at Wickham Research Laboratories and associated businesses in Hampshire by the South East Animal Liberation League in October 1984, and among those arrested was one of our Luton group. He was among the 11 people acquitted, but seven people were jailed for conspiracy to commit burglary, with sentences of up to three years.

A much more low key action in June 1985 saw the Eastern Animal Liberation League organising a visit to the Smith Kline and French laboratory site near Welwyn Garden City. After climbing over the fence and not finding too much, a number of people were arrested nearby. At Welwyn police station a policeman memorably told one of them that if he didn't talk he would stick the pencil he was holding up his arse, but there wasn't much to tell even if he had been so inclined. Around this time, those of us in Luton hunt saboteurs set up Luton Animal Rights. The idea was to broaden our base beyond vegan punks. As explained in our first newsletter (December 1985) there had been a lot of activity but "most of these actions involved between 20 and 30 people and were organized on a fairly informal basis by word of mouth. We wanted to get

more people involved in the campaign for animal liberation. We aim to organize public meetings, leafleting, demonstrations and other (legal) protests, to make people in this area more aware of what is being done to animals inside laboratories, factory farms and other animal abuse centres."

We held public meetings, showed videos and took part in demonstrations elsewhere, such as the BUAV's 'Free Mone' demonstration in February 1986 which demanded the release of a monkey being experimented on by the Royal College of Surgeons in Downe in Kent. Support for the Unilever and Wickham accused, and later prisoners, was a key focus – being an activist in that period involved spending a lot of time in court rooms, whether as a defendant or supporter. I travelled to Northampton and Leicester for the Unilever trials and to Winchester for the Wickham trial.



Following the conviction of the Unilever activists, Luton Animal Rights established a 'Freedom for all Unilever Prisoners Camp' for a few days in September 1986. Our press release stated: "In 1984, 30,000 animals (including rats, mice, guinea pigs, rabbits, pigs, primates, sheep and cattle) were tortured and killed at Colworth House. These creatures died to enable Unilever to make massive profits from the sale of cosmetics, toiletries and household products... it is outrageous that while multinational criminals like Unilever are allowed to cause untold suffering to animals, those who to expose their crimes get jailed."

We started by pitching our tents next to the main entrance to the site, but having quickly been moved on by police and security, we established the camp in a field a little distance away. A local farmer was so outraged that he drove up to our camp and sprayed it – tents, people and all – with slurry. Being covered in pig shit was not one of my finest moments. From this base camp we headed off to stage protests including picketing the laboratory entrance as the staff arrived for work in the morning. A few people ran through the gate as it opened and dispersed inside the site, and a couple ended up sitting in a field for an hour and



ON SATURDAY 16<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER AN ATTEMPT WILL BE MADE TO PUT ON A SQUAT GIG IN LUTON FEATURING LOCAL BANDS, KARMA SUTRA, PENUMBRA SIGH + PARTY GIRLS.

THE REASONS FOR DOING A SQUAT GIG ARE MANY + VARIED. THE BUREAUCRATIC ORGANISATIONS OF THE POLITICAL ELITE DO NOTHING BUT SPOUT DEAD DOGMA + EMPTY RHETORIC ABOUT THE YOUNG AND WHAT THEY THINK WE NEED. ALL THERE SCHEMES DO NOTHING EXCEPT REINFORCE OUR FEELINGS OF POWERLESSNESS. THIS ATTEMPT TO RECLAIM DISUSED PROPERTY + PUT IT TO CONSTRUCTIVE USE IS AN ATTEMPT TO PUT INTO PRACTISE OUR OWN FEELINGS OF POWER + HUMANITY + TO DO THINGS FOR OURSELVES.

WHEN ALL AROUND US WE ARE OFFERED NOTHING EXCEPT MISERY + DESTRUCTION HERE IS A CONSTRUCTIVE ATTEMPT TO CREATE SOMETHING OF REAL IMPORTANCE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF LOVE + COOPERATION, AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO WHAT WE SEE AROUND US. THIS, IT IS HOPED, IS MEANT TO BE MORE THAN JUST ANOTHER GIG. IT IS HOPED PEOPLE WILL COME, TALK + SHARE IDEAS, PARTICIPATE IN THE SHARING OF EXPERIENCE RATHER THAN BEING REDUCED TO PASSIVE SPECTATORS. WE WANT TO SHOW PEOPLE WE DON'T NEED THE PARASITIC MIDDLE-MEN + PROMOTERS WHO FEED OFF THE DEAD CORPSE OF THE MUSIC BUSINESS + ARE INTERESTED IN NOTHING EXCEPT THEIR BANK BALANCE. THERE WILL BE NO HIRED THUGS TO LOOK AFTER THE PLACE WE WILL NOT NEED THEM WE CAN CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE WHERE ALL THE HOSTILITIES THAT THEY THRIVE ON WILL BE GONE AND WE ALL TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR OWN ACTIONS.

WE CANNOT DO IT ALONE BUT WE CAN DO IT TOGETHER COME ALONG + PARTICIPATE!

ALL GROUPS ARE PLAYING FOR FREE AND ALL PROFITS WILL GO TO WICKHAM 19 DEFENCE FUND. A GROUP OF ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVISTS UNDER ATTACK FROM THE STATE.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE GIG RING LUTON 419584 SATURDAY DURING THE DAY. ADMISSION £1.

a half while security guards searched for them, no doubt fearing the worst. In the end they got bored and walked back to the gate where they were arrested but not charged.

It was as a benefit for the Wickham 19 Defence Fund that we put on our only proper squat gig in Luton in this period. The building was the former TUC Centre for the Unemployed (of which more later), which was standing empty. Somebody who had worked there and still had a set of keys let people in, and a flyer was put round which proclaimed "this attempt to reclaim disused property and put it to constructive use is an attempt to put into practice our own feelings of power and humanity and do things for ourselves... we cannot do it alone but we can do it together. Come along and participate!" A phone number was given out for people to call for the venue details on the day. Although the squat only lasted for the weekend, the gig was packed with Karma Sutra, Penumbra Sigh (as pictured on page 137) and Party Girls playing in front of banner proclaiming 'Revolution is the festival of the oppressed'.

Luton & Dunstable  
**Chronicle & Echo**  
Monday, February 25, 1985  
17p  
No. 32,263

Demonstrators campaign against sale of furs

# PROTESTERS STAGE SIT-IN AT STORE

MORE than 30 animal rights demonstrators, some of them self-confessed anarchists, staged a sit down protest in Luton's biggest department store.

The animal rights campaigners were protesting at the sale of furs and leather in Debenhams in the Arndale Centre. Police were called to eject the protesters from the Michael Taub Skin Shop in Debenhams on Saturday.

The demonstrators, mainly young people, chanted slogans and handed out leaflets during the 20 minute protest and refused requests by Debenhams management to leave.

Earlier, quick-thinking staff at a women's clothes shop, Peter Richards, also in the Arndale had foiled the protesters' plans to stage a sit down there, by locking the doors.

A spokesman for the demonstrators, who claim not to be organised into a formal group, warned after the sit down that they would be taking more action in the future.

"Fur coats and leather clothes mean killing animals to satisfy human vanity. We want to make our point to the public," said a spokeswoman, who refused to give her name.

"We will be taking more action if we do not get a change of policy in shops like Debenhams and Peter Richards," she added.

The sit-down protest lasted more than a quarter-of-an-hour before five police officers escorted the protesters, some dressed as animals, from Debenhams.

While the sit-in took place, shoppers were prevented from buying clothes from the Michael Taub "shop-within-a-shop" which rents space from Debenhams.

Shoppers were met with a barrage of shouts and the protesters chanted: "One struggle, one fight, human freedom, animal rights" and "fur trade out".

Mr Graham Cohen, general manager of Debenhams in Luton, was shouted down when he tried to ask the demonstrators to leave after they marched in, having paraded along

A protester hides behind a mask.

Furs and leather were due to be removed from the shop at the end of a closing down sale next Saturday. He said: "If the protesters want to express a view then it would be more helpful for them to do so by putting it in writing to our head office rather than disrupt the store."

Mr Cohen said he did not know if furs and leather would be back in the store in the autumn. Earlier one of his staff said that they would.

"We have a customer relations department and they will be willing to look at any genuine views which our customers put forward."

"But we do sell what the company wants and at the moment, in line with company policy, that includes furs and leather," added Mr Cohen.

Both the Debenhams manager and managers of Peter Richards said they had no comment to make on the protesters anti-fur trade views.

Police try to remove the demonstrators from Debenhams store in the Arndale Centre

## Fur

"More than 30 animal rights protesters, some of them self-confessed anarchists, staged a sit down protest at Luton's biggest department store. The animal rights campaigners were protesting at the sale of furs and leather in Debenhams in the Arndale Centre... The demonstrators, mainly young people, chanted slogans and handed out leaflets... Shoppers were met with a barrage of shouts and the protesters chanted 'One struggle, one fight, human freedom, animal rights' and 'fur trade out'." ('Protesters stage sit-in at store', Luton and Dunstable Chronicle & Echo, 25 February 1985).

Another focus was the fur industry. While there were no dedicated fur shops in Luton in this period, there would occasionally be fur sections in bigger stores, the most significant being Debenhams. Luton Animal Rights staged a protest at Debenhams in February 1985. Around thirty of us converged on the fur department with a banner reading 'A warm fur coat from a cold dead animal for a cold hearted human'.



As I'd had previously had a Saturday job there I was relieved to wear a rabbit suit to spare the embarrassment of being recognised by my former work colleagues. We sat down for 20 minutes before the police moved us on. Debenhams closed down its fur department, with the Luton News (5/12/1985) later reporting that the store admitted that the demonstration 'had contributed to the decision to no longer sell real furs'. A smaller local store, Omni, did likewise after another protest.

Some of us were slightly mystified then when in 1987 Luton Debenhams was seriously damaged by an incendiary device in an attack claimed by the Animal Liberation Front. Two other stores elsewhere were similarly targeted on the same night, in an effort to get Debenhams to remove fur from all its stores. More than twenty years later it was revealed that an undercover police officer, Bob Lambert, had been at the very least close to the cell responsible for this series of attacks. In a speech in Parliament in 2009, Green MP Caroline Lucas reported the claim by one of two people subsequently jailed for these attacks that Lambert had actually planted one of the devices – though he not surprisingly denies this (Guardian, 13 June 2012).

Under the name Bob Robinson, Lambert had infiltrated environmental and animal rights groups. Among those he befriended was someone involved in the Luton scene, and local activists from that time allege that on one occasion he turned up at a house in Luton and asked if they could provide a home for animals rescued from a laboratory.

#### McDonalds Clowns and Circus Animals

*"Police were called when animal rights protesters staged a demonstration in McDonald's restaurant in Luton George Street. About 30 protesters went into the store... waving banners, chanting Meat is Murder and blowing a referee's whistle and a horn." (Chronicle and Echo, 15/4/1985)*

One of the groups that Lambert joined was London Greenpeace, the environmental activist group that operated independently of the international Greenpeace organisation. In 1985, London Greenpeace called a National Anti-McDonalds Day, the start of a long campaign that would result in the famous McLibel court case after the company took legal action against members of the group.

In Luton we invaded the main town centre branch, and after being kicked out by the police headed to another branch in the Bury Park area. This was one of a number of protests in Luton McDonalds around that time, the most dramatic of which included a pantomime cow being killed! Like the London Greenpeace leaflet that prompted the McDonalds libel action, our own leaflets highlighted working conditions and environmental impact as well as its effect on animals. One Luton leaflet read *"So McDonalds slaughters millions of animals every year, destroys precious rain forests, and exploits both its customers and its workers... Boycott McDonalds now and help put an end to the misery and damage they cause while hiding under the disguise of a happy smiling clown."*

McDonalds wasn't the only face of the meat industry that we targeted. If as a result of the big trials and jail sentences, the Animal Liberation League tactic of mass direct action soon faded we did have a go at organising a similar action under the name 'Beds and Herts Animal Squad'. Animal Squad was the name of a TV series at the

#### PROTESTERS CHANT: MEAT IS MURDER

### Police at 'junk food' demo

**POLICE** were called when animal rights protesters staged a demonstration in McDonald's restaurant in Luton's George Street.

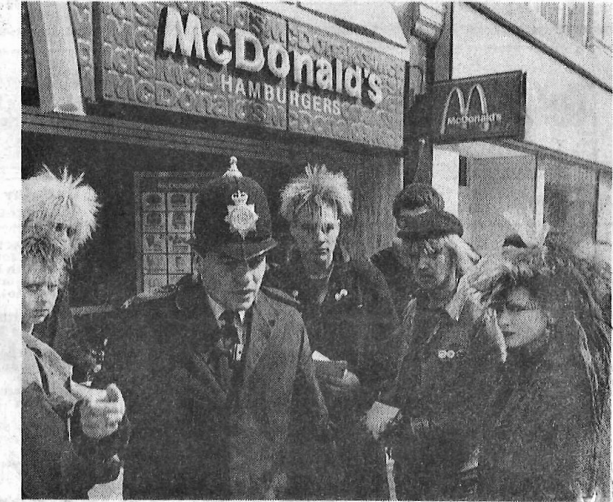
About 30 protesters went into the store at 1 pm on Saturday, waving banners chanting "Meat is murder" and blowing a referee's whistle and a horn.

They gave out leaflets to staff and customers claiming: "McDonald's murder thousands of animals each year."

The leaflets also claimed: "These facts are shamelessly camouflaged by their massive cheerful advertising campaign, encouraging people to eat their junk food."

Ten policemen turned up and asked the demonstrators to leave the store, which they did. Their demonstration had lasted 15 minutes and there were no arrests.

The group then moved on to McDonald's in Bury Park, with members swelling number as they walked along, but police pre-empted them, barring their way into the store and also stopping other customers from entering while the demonstra-



A policeman remonstrates with a group of animal rights protesters outside McDonald's in George Street, Luton.

tors were there.

After standing outside that store for half an hour giving out leaflets, the demonstrators, called the Luton Animal Rights Group, moved on to demonstrate outside the Kentucky Fried Chicken and the Chicken Kitchen in West Side, with the police following on, claiming that these fast food stores

were also responsible for the mass slaughter of animals.

The group claimed that Saturday has been designated "National Anti-McDonald's Day" by the Greenpeace movement and that similar demonstrations were taking place all over the country, including St. James and Bedford.

time highlighting the role of RSPCA inspectors. We cheekily adopted it when a group of about twenty people paid a visit to Cotswold Farm, an intensive farm near Caddington where 3,000 pigs were kept indoors. We entered the farm buildings and the local paper duly reported our findings: *"the pigs are confined in the dark in pens with slatted floors and no straw or other bedding material. Up to 14 pigs are crammed into each two-and-a-half by three metre pen, so they are unable to get adequate exercise and they are denied access to fresh air."* ('Farm cruelty alleged by animal activists', Luton News 16/10/86).

As with the EALL the drill was that people were asked to meet up having been told in general terms what would be involved – no damage, no violence – but not the details of where they would be going. The police did pay a visit afterwards to the home of one of the drivers, but at the end of the day there had been no theft or damage, just trespass.

We also protested against the use of animals in the circus, sticking up cancelled stickers on posters for a circus with animals in the town. When the Dunstable carnival procession was headed by a an elephant from Fossett's circus, a couple of people march in front with a 'Stop the Cruel Circus' banner (Dunstable Gazette, 30 May 1985).

#### Direct Action

While there were formally lots of separate animal rights groups it's probably more true to see them as concentric circles with people progressing from one to the other based on their level of commitment and readiness to break the law and, if caught,



face the consequences. So people would dip their toes into direct action through hunt sabbing, and maybe then get involved in an animal liberation league-type mass action. Some would go further and take part in sabotage and animal rescue as part of the Animal Liberation Front, but this wasn't so much a centralised organisation as a name that could be used by anyone taking that kind of action. Even amongst those who identified with the ALF there were gradations of involvement. I think most people in the Luton anarcho punk scene remained at the window breaking and glueing locks end of the direct action spectrum. For a while the Luton anarchos did have an allotment at Stockwood Park – inevitably enthusiasm faded after a few days digging and not much was grown there. But I gather that the shed was used to store a catapult that was the bane of some butchers windows in the town.

Some of the most heavily committed ALF types in that period were from the Coventry and Northampton area, and I will just mention one who hung out in Luton sometimes around that time. Gari Allen, who died in 2006, was one of the faces behind the balaclavas in many iconic animal liberation actions. He was never off duty, as those who went for a walk with him in the countryside outside Luton one day recall – a pheasant pen used to prepare birds to be shot was spontaneously demolished when stumbled across in the woods.

In Luton there was some controversy in 1986 when a local paper printed a hand written note purporting to be from the ALF threatening a new campaign in the Luton area, stating that they had been making bombs and that people could be killed. The ALF press office rejected this, stating that it was against ALF policy to harm people (Herald, 28 August 1986). Luton Animal Rights issued a statement making a similar point and also criticising the focus in the statement on attacking halal butchers: *"Halal butchers are not a priority target for genuine animal rights campaigners, as we are only too aware that in this country many more animals suffer in so-called 'humane' slaughterhouses than at the hands of the minority Muslim community."*

#### For My Country

*"In 1945, an experiment took place, a Star spangled boot kicked a helpless Asian face."* (Dominant Patri, *Experiment*, 1983)

In the late 1970s and early 1980s the Cold War between the West and the Soviet bloc hotted up, with the US planning to deploy a new generation of Cruise and Pershing nuclear missiles in Western Europe and the Soviet Union announcing the similar deployment of SS-20 missiles in Eastern Europe. There was a climate of fear of imminent nuclear apocalypse, captured in films like *Threads* (1984) which imagined a Nuclear Winter in Sheffield, and the 1960s film *The War Game* which was revived for public showings in this period. It was in this context that the peace movement, and in particular the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, had a massive resurgence. When I was at school in 1980 I'd helped set up Luton Peace Campaign, later Luton Nuclear Disarmament Campaign and coachloads of us had headed down to London to take part in huge demonstrations, such as the 1980 'Protest and Survive' rally in Trafalgar Square where Killing Joke played *Wardance* and The Pop Group played their last gig to a big crowd. We also went down to Greenham Common for a demonstration in September 1980, as this had

been ear-marked as one of the cruise missile bases. The following year, a group of women chained themselves to the fence at Greenham and established the women's peace camp that was to become the main focus for non-violent direct action over the following years.

In the early 1980s, the front of the big CND demonstrations became a gathering point for angry punks and anarchists frustrated at the apparent lack of urgency implied in marching from A to B to listen to Labour MPs and other dignitaries. There would be heckling of politicians and scuffles with the police – I must admit I'm slightly embarrassed by some of these antics now, they must have been incomprehensible to people who had just turned up with their kids on demos to do their bit. And if we thought that CND weren't radical enough, why didn't we just get it together to do something better rather than berate them for not doing so?

Sometimes though the anarchos did do their own thing. In June 1984, Ronald Reagan visited London and there was a big demonstration starting, like so many others at that time, from Trafalgar Square. We passed by the heavily guarded US embassy then into Hyde Park where some Class War types told me and my friends that people were planning to meet up at Charing Cross station. As the rally continued in the park, about 40 people ran down the side of the posh Savoy Hotel, smashing windows. The group quickly dispersed and agreed to regroup in Covent Garden, where more windows were broken in a bank and some offices, including *The Lady* magazine.

Closer to Luton than Greenham Common was the second planned cruise missile base at RAF Molesworth in Cambridgeshire. The Government had announced in 1980 that 64 cruise missiles were to be housed there, and work soon began to prepare the base. The initial Molesworth People's Peace Camp was set up by Christian pacifists from the Fellowship of Reconciliation in December 1981. It operated on a similar basis to the camp at Greenham, but unlike Greenham included men as well as women. In August 1984 the existing peace camp at Molesworth was supplemented by the arrival of the Peace Convoy, who set up a second camp called Rainbow Fields Village. The Convoy was a mobile community living in vans, buses and other customised vehicles. As they travelled from free festival to peace camp in the 1980s they became media folk devils and were denounced by the government as 'medieval brigands'.

The state's response was not confined to verbal abuse. In August 1984 Convoy vehicles were wrecked by police at Nostell Priory in Yorkshire. On 6 February 1985 a huge police and military operation was mounted to clear Rainbow Fields and 'secure' Molesworth with barbed wire fences: *"The 150 rainbow villagers pounced upon by 1500 Royal Engineers, 600 MOD police, and 900 civilian police were given one hour to move of their own volition or, as happened, be bulldozed off"* (*Guardian*, 14 February 1985). The Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine famously turned up in combat gear for the benefit of the gathered media.

A group of us from Luton rushed up there the next day. The countryside was covered in snow, with rolls of barbed wire surrounding the base and military policemen





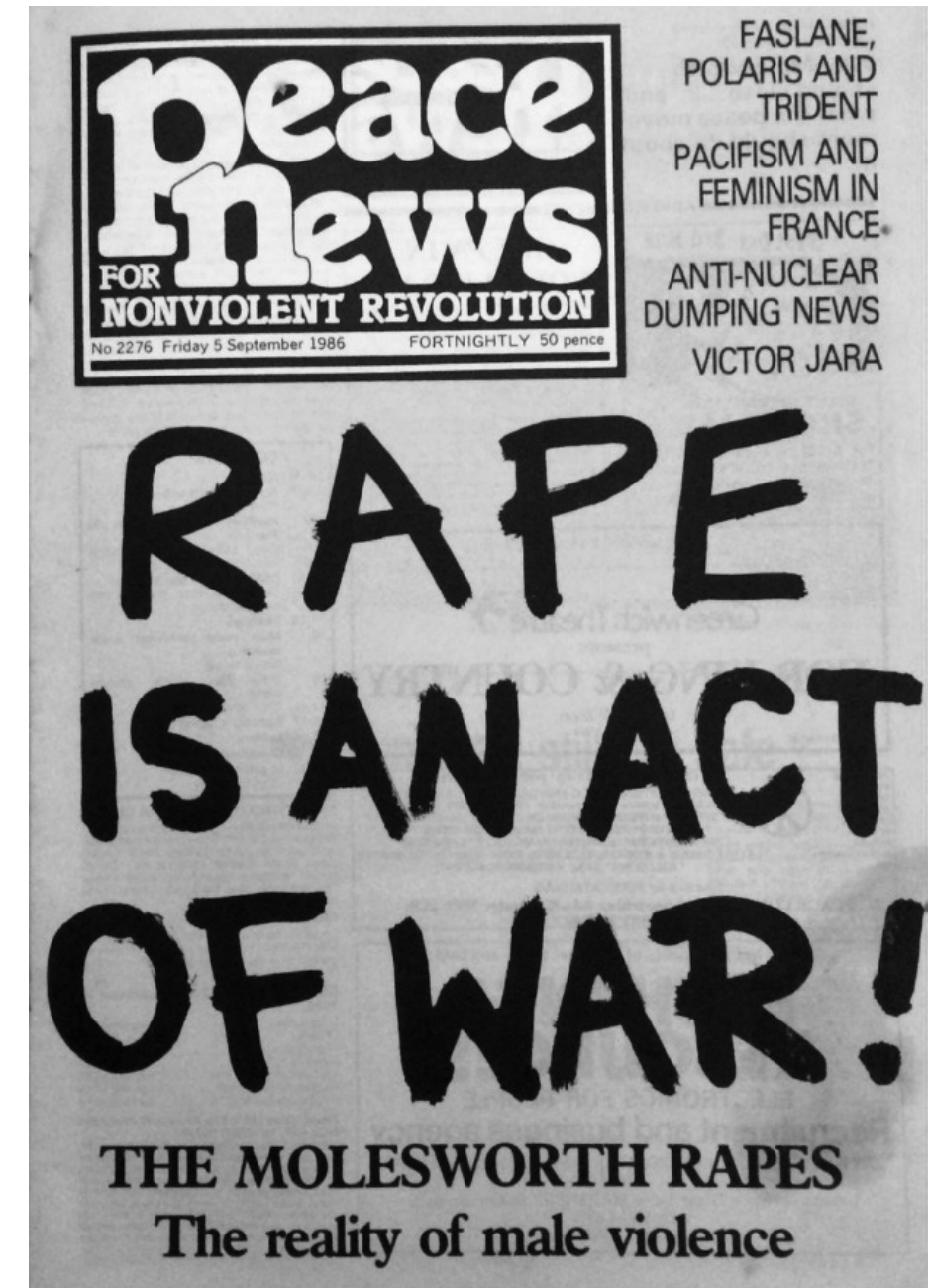
wandering around in green flak jackets. There wasn't much to be done apart from drink cups of tea in one of the surviving caravans outside the base. The convoy moved on, only to be trashed by the police later in the year in what became known as the Battle of the Beanfield.

*"A mob of anarchists started fires and threw stones as they battled with police at the Molesworth CND demonstration yesterday. They set fire to rubbish skips and used them as battering rams to break down a barbed wire fence into Ministry of Defence land near the airbase." (Daily Mail, 9 April 1985)*

When we returned to Molesworth a couple of months later for a big CND Easter demonstration (8 April 1985), the barbed wire had been replaced by high permanent fences. Coaches disgorged thousands of us into the mud and rain to wander round in what felt like a big tightly prescribed circle. On the same weekend that anti-missile protests were held across Europe – including 300,000 people taking part in protests in West Germany – around 20,000 encircled Molesworth: *"CND's finale was to 'ring the base with sound'... Whistles, bells, trumpets, horns and harsh football rattles drowned even the four military helicopters overhead"* (Guardian, 9 April 1985).

At one of the few gaps in the fencing we joined with the rest of the anarcho-punk contingent and made an attempt to push through the police lines. Skips were overturned and some fencing pulled up before police snatch squads piled in. Inevitably several of the Luton contingent were among the 74 arrested that day, two of them later charged with criminal damage.

Later in the summer of 1985, when we held a People's Picnic in Luton's Popes Meadow promising an 'anarchic drunken Sunday afternoon', the flyer had the slogan 'Booze not Cruise'. Despite our festivities and our protests the first missiles arrived at Molesworth the following year, transported by road from RAF Alconbury where they had been flown in to from the USA. They did not stay long, however. Gorbachev



had come to power in the Soviet Union, and the Cold War was thawing. The US and USSR agreed a nuclear weapons treaty in 1987 which led to missiles being removed from Molesworth by the end of 1988. A peace camp remained in the vicinity until after the missile base had been closed for good.

There were protests in the town too. On the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, around 100 people joined a Luton CND march which ended with laying wreaths at the war memorial. The newspaper report of the march also noted that two members had taken part in an action at Molesworth earlier in the week; one said *"We told the police that we were going to cut the boundary fence with wirecutters, but they refused to arrest us"* (Luton News, 8/8/1985). On another occasion, three people were arrested in scuffles with police at a CND rally in Luton town centre. The police had apparently attempted to seize a banner 'Thatcher, Reagan – State Terrorists' (Luton News, 1/5/86)



### The Sisters of Luton Anarchist Group

The issue of whether women should organise separately from men in some situations was a major one in the peace movement, and was thrown into sharp relief by incidents at Molesworth in 1986. A couple of Luton women who had been involved at Molesworth peace camp were amongst those who took action following *"the revelation that three women have been raped by "peace" campers in the last year... On Friday August 29 a group of women, including two women who have been raped, visited the camp' and sprayed messages on caravans."* (Peace News, 5 September 1986). The women called for the camp to close if it couldn't deal with the rapists, a position backed by the Peace News collective and others. *"They feel that a peace camp where there is no peace for wimmin is not worth preserving. Unfortunately the attitude of most of the campers has been at best complacent – some of them seem as angry about the actions taken by the wimmin against the camp as concerned about preventing further rapes at Molesworth."* (Luton Class War newsletter, September 1986).

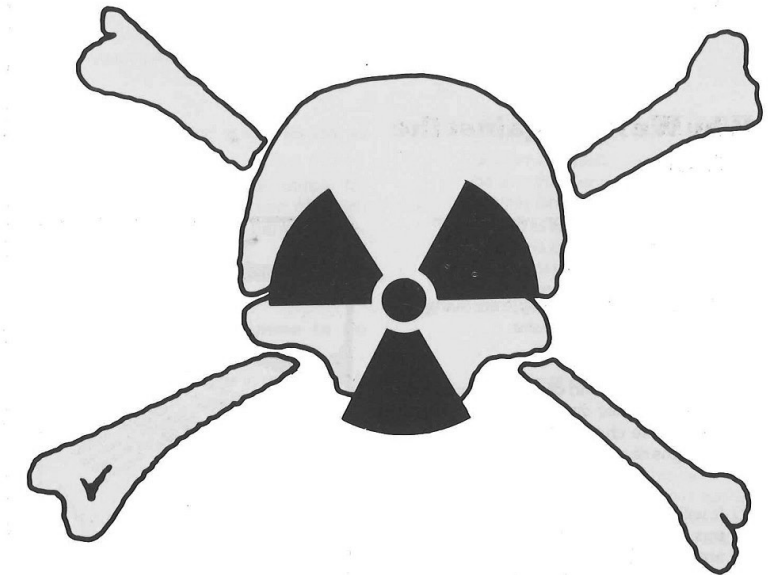
In the wider anarchist scene there were some women-only events and actions. In July 1986, nine women from Luton attended an anarchist-feminist conference in Nottingham: *"About 70 or 80 wimmin were there" with "...workshops on such things as sexuality, Ireland, direct action and pornography. Films were shown, a crèche provided along with vegan food... A new group has been set up called SL@GS."* (Sisters of Luton Anarchist Group). *"The following month SL@GS took action in the town – they 'went into WH Smith's, removed all the porn mags from the shelves and placed them in a bin liner while supporters gave out leaflets. It wasn't until later that the staff discovered that the mags were ruined – the bin liner had contained vegetable oil."* Later the group went in to a porn shop *"and threw everything on the floor. The group complained that pornography falsely portrayed women 'as passive objects who enjoy being used, abused and raped by men'."* (Luton Class War newsletter, September 1986).

### Bedfordshire against Nuclear Dumping

If nuclear weapons were one concern, nuclear power and its associated waste were another. In the mid-1980s, Nirex (Nuclear Industry Radioactive Waste Executive) had announced plans to dump radioactive waste in a site at Elstow in Bedfordshire. The plan was opposed by local Councils, and a Bedfordshire Against Nuclear Dumping campaign was established. Bedford anarchists decided a more direct approach was needed, and they stormed the Nirex office with smoke bombs in December 1984, coming back the following month to brick and paint bomb the windows. Several people were arrested and there were ongoing actions in support of the 'Bedford Four' including an occupation of the Nirex office.

In Luton, the Nirex campaign galvanised the local scene to produce the 24 track cassette compilation *Dump it on Parliament* in 1986. As well as featuring anarcho bands Karma Sutra and Penumbra Sigh, it included most of the local post-punk alternative bands including Click Click, Party Girls, and Corpaelia. Proceeds were to go to people who have been fined by the courts for their participation in acts of direct action against the plans (for nuclear dumping), though shortly after the tape came out the Government announced that the plans would not be going ahead. The cassette has had an interesting afterlife though – in 2015 a *Dump it on*

**NIREX**  
wants to dump radioactive  
waste at Elstow



**SAY NO !**

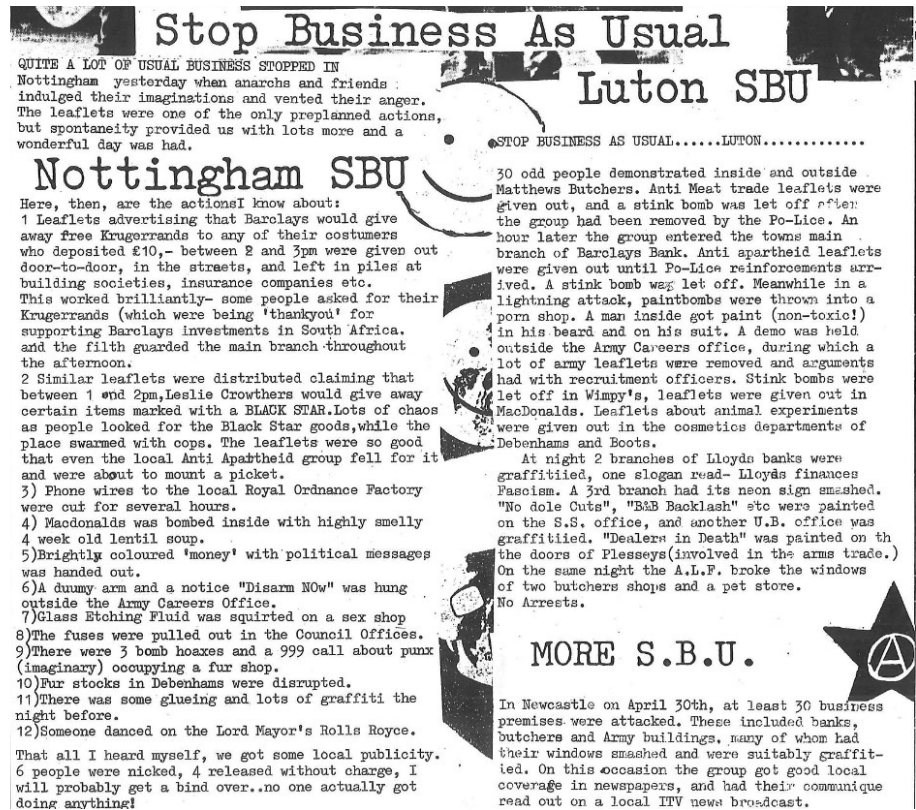
**Published for the people of Bedfordshire, their children  
and their grandchildren's grandchildren**

*Parliament Revisited* project was carried out as 'a new living history artwork' by artists DashnDem and Roshi Nasehi, commissioned by Bedford Creative Arts. This included getting bands from today to cover material from the compilation and write their own contemporary protest songs, with UK Decay's Spon as co-producer.

### Stop the City

All of this single issue campaigning, no matter how militant, around animal rights, war and nuclear power, had its limitations. The series of 'Stop the City' actions in 1983/84 represented an attempt to move onto another level with an audacious call to hold a *"protest and carnival against war, oppression and exploitation"* in the financial heart of London. There was no single organisation behind the actions, though London Greenpeace helped initiate it. The idea was that people would plan their own actions within the overall Stop the City framework. Stop the City wasn't simply a punk protest. It also drew its energy from the radical fringes of the peace and animal rights movements and from the broader anarchist scene, as well





Report from *Crowbar* magazine, No.43, 1985

as from some veterans of the earlier free festival counter culture. But it was through the anarcho-punk scene that a lot of the information circulated about Stop the City, and through which many people came together to organise themselves to get to London from all over the country. The first action in September 1983 drew around 1500 people into the City of London, with 200 arrests, and this led to some serious organising for a bigger and better event in March 1984. In January there was a national planning meeting held at the Ambulance Centre squat in South London, scene of many punk gigs.

What made Stop the City so exciting was that it didn't play by the rules. There was no march along a prearranged route negotiated in advance with the police. No permission was asked for – instead people were invited to turn up and use their own creativity and imagination. In March 1984 a combination of numbers – at least 2,000 people turned up – and innovative tactics gave the protesters the upper hand for much of the day. Rather than get caught up in ritual set piece confrontations with the police, there was endless movement with groups heading off in all directions and no direction, blocking traffic and forcing the police to spread themselves thinly. There was a tangible sense of power – it was the first time I had seen people de-arrested. Coming down Change Alley in the City we came across some isolated cops trying to make arrests, but they were quickly surrounded by a big crowd and let people go. Instead of hanging around a load of us just ran off and found ourselves on London Bridge where we blocked the traffic until a lorry decided to call our bluff and drive straight towards us. Somebody kicked a Bentley or some other luxury car stuck in the traffic. There was anti-nuclear street theatre, and people in City suits and bowler hats made out of bin liners carrying copies of

the Financial Times with slogans written on them like 'Read all about it- the bomb is coming'. By the end of the day, the police were more or less back in control. Nearly 400 people had been arrested and many of the remainder were stuck in front of the Royal Exchange building inside a police cordon – nobody called it 'kettling' then, but that was what it amounted to.

A smaller Stop the City was called at short notice on May 31<sup>st</sup>, followed by another action on September 27<sup>th</sup> 1985 which a big group of us from Luton went up to again a couple of thousand people turned up, but this time the police were better prepared. All police leave was cancelled, and people were arrested as soon as they gathered in groups. Some people had dressed rather unconvincingly in casual or office clothes so as not to appear so conspicuous, but most were in standard punk outfits and easily distinguishable from the mass of office workers in the city and subject to being rounded up quickly. Occasionally people managed to break away and run round the back streets. Some bank windows were broken, and some slogans painted. Others went further afield, dying the Trafalgar Square fountains red or running through the West End. But by swamping the streets of the City and making nearly 500 arrests from early in the day, the police stopped any major disruption.

There were attempts to hold similar protests elsewhere but they did not generally amount to much. The Birmingham Stop the City on October 11<sup>th</sup> 1984 only attracted 150 people prompting a report in *Green Anarchist* (November 1984) written by one of the Luton contingent entitled *Stop the City? We couldn't even stop a loo*. A group managed to break away "and entered shops like Tesco's and threw joints of meat around using ketchup bottles as targets in one case... There was the unexpected presence of a couple of dozen black youths who arrived with empty sports bags and wanted us to have a rampage/riot in the town centre so that they could do some expropriating." Luton once again registered among the 30 people arrested.

*"Anarchist protest – Up to 60 young anarchists staged a series of demonstrations throughout Luton on Tuesday, protesting outside shops, a bank and an army careers office. The protests were mounted as part of a nationwide day of action dubbed 'Stop Business as Usual'," (Luton News, 2 May 1985).*

By the following year most people had sussed that there was no point staging another Stop the City, as the element of surprise had been lost. Instead there was a proposal for people to carry out actions in their own areas under the banner 'Stop business as Usual' on April 30<sup>th</sup> 1995 – the idea originally hatched by anarchists in San Francisco. This wasn't quite so exciting as there weren't the same numbers involved. Still in Luton we had some fun roaming the town demonstrating inside Barclays Bank (with anti-apartheid leaflets and stink bombs), Matthews Butchers, McDonalds (again) and an Army Careers Office. Paint bombs were thrown into a porn shop. In the evening, slogans were painted on Lloyds Bank ('Lloyds finance fascism' referred to its notorious links with the Chilean military dictatorship) and other places, while broken windows in butchers shops were claimed in the name of the ALF. Similar actions took place in Nottingham, Newcastle and Norwich, among other places.



## Smash South African Business

### STOP SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESS DAY — LUTON

People demonstrated in 2 town centre branches of Barclays Bank. Leaflets were given out, Barclays own leaflets were thrown down the escalator, and a glass door was smashed. In Tescos and Sainsburys trolleys were filled with South African goods and left at check-outs. That night a third branch of Barclays was paintbombed, and a Wimpys Restaurant was graffitied.

A week later, the South African Ambassador came to town to speak to a meeting organised by Luton's racist MP, John Carlisle, and about 60 people picketed. People going in and out of the meeting

were spat on and shouted at. One car leaving was dented by flying boots. One person was arrested.

On October 12th the official 'Luton anti-apartheid group' organised a picket of Barclays. Much to their dismay, some of us tried to get inside the bank, but were stopped by the police. We did stop the door for a few minutes.

*Luton @s.*

### STOP SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESS — MANCHESTER

Several Barclays Banks around Manches were sprayed up and glue was put in the locks. Posters were also put up. South African Airways had extra graffiti, glue and paint. No arrests.

*Subversive @non*

*Black Flag*, 19 November 1985

### Anti-Apartheid

A similar call went out for a 'Stop South African Business as Usual' the following September, with a leaflet put out from the 121 Centre in Brixton. In Luton, Barclays Bank was again the main focus, with demonstrations inside a couple of branches – in one of which a glass door was smashed – and a third branch being paintbombed that night, Shopping trolleys were filled with South African goods and abandoned at checkouts in Sainsburys and Tesco.

In Luton solidarity with the movement in South Africa had a particular resonance due to the antics of local Conservative MP John Carlisle. Linked to the far right Monday Club of the Conservative Party, he frequently made anti-immigration speeches and called for the 'voluntary repatriation' of black people from the UK, as well as being a nationally notorious ally of the apartheid regime – for which he earned the nickname 'the Member for Johannesburg'.

In October 1985 60 people picketed a meeting at Luton Town Hall where Carlisle and the South African ambassador were speaking. The following year he sustained a broken figure in a scuffle with anti-apartheid protesters at Bradford University, was chased out of Oxford when he tried to give a talk to the Monday Club and was prevented from speaking by protests at York University and Leeds Polytechnic. He was taken ill in October 1986 after being jostled on his way into a meeting at St Joseph's Church in Luton.

### The Miners Strike

If the struggle in South African was inspiring it was a long way away. Closer to home one of the most important episodes in the history of class struggle in the UK was to pose a major challenge to anarcho-punk ideology. Before moving back to Luton in the summer of 1984 I had been at college in Canterbury, and living so close to the three mines of the Kent coalfield had become very involved in the Miners Support Group. This has included picketing Canterbury prison when one of the Kent miners leaders was jailed and travelling on the Kent NUM coaches to a big demo in Mansfield that ended in a near riot.

It was a bit of a surprise to me that among some of the 'anarcho-punks' in Luton and elsewhere there was initially some ambivalence about supporting the miners. After all didn't they eat meat and weren't they fighting to work in an environmentally unsound industry? The core anarcho-punk/Crass worldview could be very moralistic, with little room for the contradictions most working class people faced in trying to get by while holding on to some dignity. As the strike progressed though it became impossible to sit on the fence. The militancy of the miners was inspiring, and as they faced the onslaught of a massive state/police operation it was obvious that solidarity was the only decent response for anybody who claimed to be against 'the system'. Chumbawamba, who by this point were very influential among the more politically-clued up punks, played a key role in winning people in that scene over to actively backing the strike. Their 1984 'Common Ground' cassette explicitly made the case that 'even though we disagree, we share a common enemy', and they backed this up with a miners benefit gig tour in August 1984 that also included Flux of Pink Indians, D&V and Kukl (the latter featuring a young Bjork). Karma Sutra supported Chumba at a miners benefit at Leeds Trades Club that summer too. Soon in Luton, punks were helping out at the town centre collections for the miners, not without grumbling from some Labour Party types who worried that this would give the miners a bad image. In July 1984 a couple of miners stopped off to collect money in Luton town centre while walking from Yorkshire to London to raise money for the strike fund – they didn't seem fazed by the haircuts of some of their supporters!

In February 1985, a group of us from Luton travelled down to a big miners demonstration in London that ended with clashes with police. There were chaotic scenes as police horses charged the crowd, and people pulled metal barriers across the road to try and stop them. It felt like the conflict that had raged in pit villages was getting closer to home, but not for long – the strike was to come to an end a couple of weeks later.

*"On February 24<sup>th</sup>, a huge march of 80,000 miners and their supporters was held in London, in a festive atmosphere. The feeling of solidarity was destroyed when plain clothes police and uniformed police arrested 2 Notts miners as their part of the March neared the Theatre of War. Police and miners were quick to respond with skirmishes breaking out... Some people were viciously beaten as they were chased, jumped on and dragged to vans and into Whitehall buildings. One woman lost consciousness as her head was bashed on the pavement by the five cops arresting here. Stacks of crowd barriers were thrown off nearby trucks."* (*Black Flag*, 18/3/1985)

*"Pit strike demonstrators battled with police in Whitehall yesterday. In scenes reminiscent of picket line violence, a surging mob hurled stones, chunks of wood and plastic beer bottles at police. Close to the Houses of Parliament, mounted police rode in to disperse the crowd... Several streets had to be sealed off at the height of the clashes in which 101 of the chanting marchers were arrested... The first fighting started outside Whitehall's Theatre of War, with black and red flag of the International Anarchist Movement at the thick of it."* ('Pit violence comes to Whitehall', *Daily Mail*, 25 February 1985)



### Wapping

The next prolonged major strike started early in 1986, when Rupert Murdoch's News International sacked 5,000 workers and moved production of its newspapers – *The Sun*, *The Times* and the *News of the World* – to a new plant in Wapping. This was the start of a long and bitter dispute with mass pickets at Wapping every Saturday night trying to stop the papers leaving, facing police with riot shields and horses. There was a Luton connection to the dispute in that papers were being distributed by a fleet of TNT lorries operating out of a depot in Luton. Every night the TNT lorries would drive up the motorway from Wapping to Luton, where the papers were transferred to a fleet of white vans for distribution to news agents across the South East. Flying pickets would sometimes target TNT's 'Fortress Luton', including in June 1986 when 150 people descended on the Cosgrove Way depot and windscreens were smashed in TNT vehicles.

If punk clothes had been a liability at Stop the City, they did sometimes work to our advantage. One night a vanload of us were heading back to Luton having been down to Wapping for a demonstration. On the way we saw one of the 'scab' TNT lorries driving behind us and we tried to delay its progress by driving very slowly in the middle of the road. Later on we were pulled over on the M1 motorway by the police who were investigating reports that a white transit van had been trying to force a TNT lorry off the road (a slight exaggeration!). We said we were on our way back from a punk gig and a look at the motley crew in the back of the van- not a horny handed printer in sight – was enough to convince the police that we were telling the truth.

### Dole Days in Luton

*"In Luton hundreds of unemployed people under the age of 26 are being made homeless by new government rules on Bed and Breakfast accommodation. The government and their friends in the media claim that these new regulations are to stop people taking free holidays at the taxpayers' expense. The reality is that most people live in B&B because they have nowhere else to go. Who'd take a holiday in Luton?"* (Luton Bed and Breakfast Claimants Action Group leaflet, June 1985).

One of the criticisms sometimes levelled at the anarcho-punk scene is that its politics were a kind of militant liberalism in which activists always seemed to be seeking to act on behalf of others – whether animals or people in far off places – rather than confronting their own position as young, mostly working class people in a capitalist society. There is some merit in this, though a counter argument could of course be made that they refused to be confined to their narrow sectional interest and instead tried to embrace a more global critique of oppression and exploitation. Most punks didn't have the option of taking part personally in workplace-based class struggle politics, as most weren't working (though interestingly in the Luton scene, several of the women did have jobs, unlike almost all the men). But of course we were directly affected by what was going on in the economy as young unemployed people living on benefits.

My 1985 diary has the same entry on almost every Thursday – 'Sign on, Switch'. The weekly 'Giro Thursday' routine consisted on signing on at the dole office,

cashing in our 'Personal Issue' cheque at the post office, buying in our vegan supplies for the week, and then going home to crimp our hair before heading to the pub and then The Switch Club, the town's only regular alternative night. There to drink and dance to songs like Spear of Destiny's *Liberator*, *Baby Turns Blue* by the Virgin Prunes, the Sisters of Mercy's *Alice*, *Dark Entries* by Bauhaus and The Cult's *She Sells Sanctuary*. In a departure from the general gothdom the last record was usually *Tequila* by The Champs.

Many of us were living in bedsits in the town's London Road area owned by the late Gerry Cremin, a generally amiable Irish landlord who nevertheless thought it necessary to collect the rent accompanied by burly sons, an Alsatian and a baseball bat. The deal was that in return for providing a nominal breakfast which hardly anyone got out of bed for, the landlord was able to charge the DHSS a higher rent, and the tenants got a little bit more on their dole – so we took home a massive £39 a week. It wasn't exactly paradise, but it was too good to last.

In 1985, the Government decided to change the rules so that young people under 26 could only stay in board and lodging for four weeks before their rent and benefits were cut – for those of us living in the Costa del Cremin this threatened homelessness. Actually it was no joke – the *Luton News* reported that Michael Ball, a 24 year old from Marsh Farm, hanged himself when he was forced to move by the new regulations.

In June 1985, a Bed and Breakfast Claimants Action Group was set up at a meeting at the TUC Centre for the Unemployed (17 Dunstable Road). This was a trade union sponsored centre which offered benefits and other advice, and for which Luton bands including Karma Sutra, Click Click and Party Girls had played a benefit at the local college (now University of Bedfordshire). I wish I still had my ticket for that, as they were hand printed by Liz Price who went on to be in indie pop band Tallulah Gosh and then to win the 2012 Turner Prize for her video art.

Over the next few weeks, we occupied Luton DHSS and the Anglia TV office, and disrupted council meetings, with between 20 and 50 people taking part. When Prince Charles visited the town we occupied the Radio Bedfordshire office, while Karen Tharsby (singer with Penumbra Sigh, who sadly died in 2013) was arrested for sticking her fingers up at the heir to the throne. Plans were also laid for squatting – a list of empty properties was put together at the Centre for the Unemployed and circulated in the name of 'Luton Squatters Advisory Service' ('Jobless Encouraged to become Squatters', *Luton News*, 27 June 1985).

Things came to a head in July 1985 when at another council meeting in the Town Hall there was a scuffle with councillors. Gerard Benton – an advice worker at the unemployed centre – was arrested and later jailed for six months for 'actual body harm'. After he was convicted, some of Gerry's friends repaid the councilor who had given what they believed to be misleading evidence against him with a number of pranks, including placing an advert in a local paper offering prison uniforms for sale, with her phone number. On his release, Gerry continued in advice work until his untimely death in 2005 at the age of 47.



It was all too much for the respectable Labour Party types who ran the Centre for the Unemployed. We were banned from meeting there anymore, and not long afterwards it closed down – though as described above it was then squatted for one weekend only for a Wickham 19 benefit gig.

*“Jobless Protesters Occupy DHSS Office – A demonstration at Luton’s DHSS office against new Government rules for the unemployed ended when police were called in to break it up. Around 40 unemployed people occupied the Guildford Street office on Thursday... They occupied the offices for two hours and hung up banners in windows until police were called by the manager.” (Luton News, 20 June 1985)*

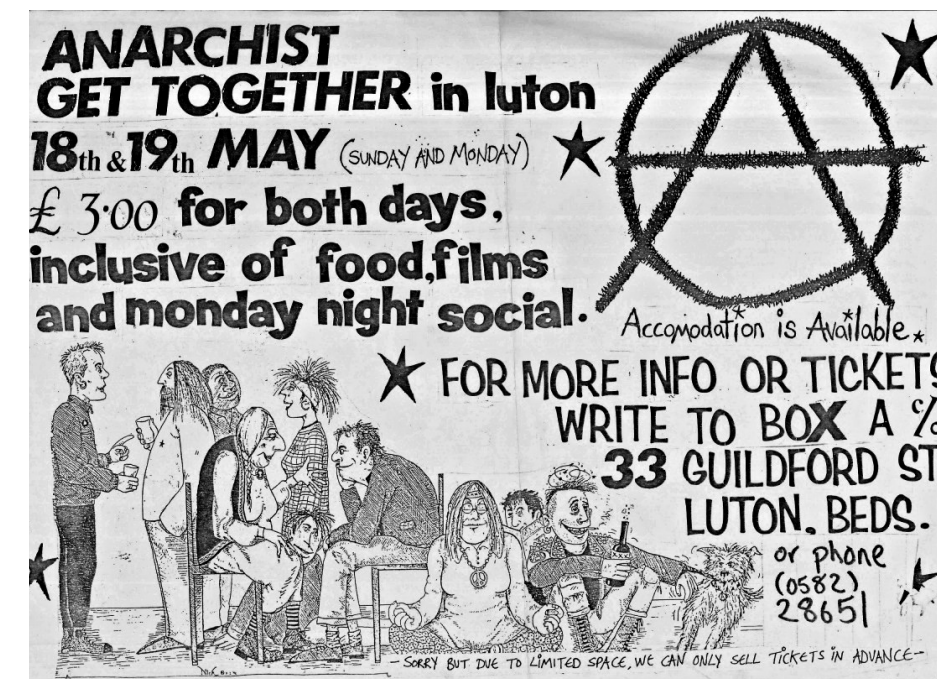
*“...furious councilors and demonstrators jostled and argued when a protest got out of hand during a committee meeting at Luton Town Hall last week. Around 30 punk-style protesters objecting to the new bed and breakfast laws were ejected by police. One arrest was made after coffee cups were broken during the row.” (Herald, 11 July 1985)*

### Post-anarcho-punk?

If anarcho-punk activism had arguably peaked with the Stop the City demos, people in Luton and many other places were still very busy afterwards, some of which has been described above. Ideas though were changing, as were haircuts and clothes for some of us. Faced with state violence in the miners strike and against the Convoy at Nostell Priory and at the Battle of the Beanfield, the pure pacifist belief in non-violence at all costs was fading – even Crass seemed to have abandoned it by the end. People began to move off in different directions. Some went further into the travelling/counter-cultural lifestyle. Others engaged more with class struggle anarchist ideas, with Class War being the most influential force. Some of us went down to Hampstead for the Class War ‘Bash the Rich’ march in September 1985, as well as to the Anarchist Picnic on Hampstead Heath earlier that year. The Anarchist Bookfair was another big day out in London, held at the Conway Hall from 1985 and for ten years after.

Ideas from beyond the Crass canon were finding their way into bands’ lyrics. Karma Sutra started referencing the Situationists (e.g. ‘no longer are we content to just spectate’ in their song *Pillow Talk*), and they weren’t the only band culling such phrases, in the first instance from Larry Law’s situ-popularizing *Spectacular Times* booklets. The cover of the band’s 1987 *Day Dreams of a Production Line Worker* album features an image of a sleeping factory worker found in *Facing Reality*, a text by dissident Marxists CLR James and Grace Lee (sadly many copies of the record were to be seized by police while the band were crossing from Switzerland to Italy). The band too were split about where to go next, as lead singer Dave Commodity later recalled: “ultimately the endless wrestling pulled us apart... Situationism vs Class War, half the band being into the whole traveller/festival thing, while the other half wanted to break out of the punk ghetto, this all took its toll” (booklet for *Anti-Society Anarcho-Punk Compilation*, 2006).

A two day ‘Anarchist Get Together’ was held in Luton in May 1986 at the 33 Arts Centre – an important hub for alternative arts, music and politics in the town which for a while was used as the postal address for Luton Anarchists, and Luton Animal Rights. Not long after, a Luton Class War group was formed. They



organised another anti-apartheid protest inside Barclays Bank in August 1986, as well as taking part in a further claimants sit-in protest against benefit cuts at the DHSS (14/8/1986) during which one person was arrested after a door was broken. People working in the dole office were no longer to be criticized for working for the system, but seen as potential allies. Luton Class War “gave out leaflets to DHSS workers, arguing that they should unite with claimants to stop these attacks.” The group was banned from holding a public meeting at Luton Town Hall “because two councilors objected to our views on violence” and two people were “charged with selling literature likely to cause a breach of the peace” for selling copies of *Class War* with an anti-Royal ‘Better Dead than Wed’ front page in the town” (Luton Class War newsletter, September 1986).

As the 1980s wore on, the punk uniform was beginning to feel restrictive and there was so much exciting new music being made beyond its borders, such as early hip hop and electro. By the time I moved down to London in early 1987 I might have seen myself as an anarchist but no longer as a punk, even if I continued going to punk gigs. Looking back 30 years later I am amazed at the intensity of activism from what was a fairly small group of people in Luton – maybe a core of 20-odd people over a couple of years. Yes we were sometimes naïve and moralistic, but nobody can say we didn’t have a go! I’m sure my younger and older selves could have a healthy debate about tactics and priorities, but I’d like to think that many of us have kept the faith in our own ways. There have been many adventures since and people from that Luton punk scene have been amongst it in some of them – including the free parties of the 1990s (such as Reclaim the Streets and Luton’s Exodus Collective). I know that whenever there’s something going on in that part of the world, whether opposing the racism of the English Defence League and Britain First, or supporting migrant women locked up at Yarl’s Wood detention centre, someone from that mid-1980s movement will be there somewhere.



# WE WANT TO RIOT

FROM THE FRONTLINE.....BRIXTON BULLETIN. MON13 APRIL  
After years of street crimes and brutality, and despite the infiltration from outside of thousands of paid provocateurs, the Brixton Police has finally been taught a short, sharp lesson by the local community. It has been a constant source of amazement to observers just how long the local population have allowed these professional scare-mongers to roam the streets unchecked, harassing and beating up the youth and terrorising the residents.

Over the last three years there has been a marked increase in the street crime and violence carried out by these so-called 'protectors'. The local population has stood by helplessly while their children have been snatched off the streets by these overtly racist and sexist gangs of thugs - kidnapped under the sinister 'sus law' they operate.

At least one recognised public execution has already been carried out by these murderous thugs para-military wing, the SPG, whilst dozens of 'unsolved' murders, which have happened behind the closed doors of police stations and prisons, are readily attributable to these state-styled stormtroopers and their cronies.

Relative calm returned to the streets on Sunday, only after they adopted their, by now familiar, ploy of following an afternoon of unbridled mayhem with a swift withdrawal at twilight (Lewisham residents are all too aware of this tactic). But the remarks of one of the thugs 'guarding' Stockwell station sums up the measure of their defeat - in a dejected tone he muttered to his mates: 'The whole world will be laughing at us...' But he was wrong. The world is not amused at having these gangs of thugs strutting around its streets under the guise of 'law n' order'. The world will want to know:

WHO ARE THE SINISTER BRAINS BEHIND THE BRIXTON RIOTS WHO PLANNED AND EXECUTED MASSIVE ACTION AGAINST THE COMMUNITY???

But, above all, will remain the question of JUST HOW LONG ARE WE PREPARED TO PUT UP WITH THESE ARROGANT, MARAUDING THUGS WHO ANSWER TO NO-ONE BUT THEMSELVES???

## NOT

## TO

# WORK

Unemployment/Assemblies/Job Reports/Conferences  
Not Enough Illustration/Yes It's the

LONDON WORKERS GROUP BULLETIN NO.10. MAY 1981

A Woman in a Male Dominated Industry

## A WOMAN IN A MALE DOMINATED INDUSTRY

Gail Thibert

I was asked what it was like to be a woman in a male dominated industry when I was in bands in the 1980s

I was asked to join my first ever band by a pen friend. I couldn't play an instrument but I believed I could sing in tune, so singer it was. There was another woman on bass guitar, which I thought was pretty cool as not many women in bands played instruments. There was still an assumption that if you were female and in a band, then you must be the singer, or only got in for your looks, as women were still somewhat considered the weaker sex and too stupid to be able to learn to play an instrument. I came across more of those attitudes when I joined the Lost Cherrees. They already had a singer so I was encouraged to learn keyboards and eventually managed to get the hand of that as well as backing vocals. The good thing about punk was that you didn't have to really have much talent musically, just passion and enthusiasm. When people heard I was in a band, they often assumed again, that I was the singer, and were genuinely surprised when I said keyboard player. I still came across similar attitudes in the 2000s when I was in the Pukes. Both men and women were surprised that so many women could learn an instrument from scratch without formal training and join a band.

Mostly other band mates were supportive but gigging with the Lost Cherrees in the 1980s still revealed many sexist attitudes. Although our music was anarcho-punk and the audience were political, there was always a small, usually skinhead minority who would come to the front of the stage and cat call the singers. Hidden behind the keyboards, I got less of it. The calls to 'get yer tits out for the lads' became tedious and our songs such as *Sexism's Sick*, fell on deaf ears. However, I was encouraged for many years even after leaving the band when plenty of women came up to me to say how much they enjoyed the Lost Cherrees and the songs and how much the album had influenced them and how they related to it all. I was fighting my own personal battles while in the band and after being raped at a party when I was 19, started to cover up my body more. I was getting cat called all the time for wearing my usual fishnet tights and short skirts and stilettos, which had previously empowered me, but now made me feel like a magnet to nutters and perverts. My previously bleached hair went black and I started to wear DM boots or biker boots so that I could run if I felt in danger.

At one point, we had three women in the Lost Cherrees so it was nice to have other female energy around me. I never really felt I was treated different to the men in the industry; we were just small timers so I never really met too many idiots! I can, however, remember being at a gig as a punter and the male guitarist of a band trying to protect me from a nutter who was annoying everyone. Although his efforts were gallant, I was wondering why he felt the need to do? I could look after myself! In a way I felt undermined by his efforts: the poor helpless female. After leaving the Lost Cherrees, I went on to audition for a couple of other bands. I did find that



some male bands didn't know how to draw the line between a woman coming for an audition and a woman coming to be chatted up and enticed into bed. I took to riding a motorbike and wearing protective leathers. Not very vegetarian or vegan, but I felt safer, especially in big fuck off biker boots.

I'd like to see more women in bands, to claim their power and talent or just have a good old scream. I've been lucky in that a lot of my female friends are also in bands, including Hagar the Womb and Rubella Ballet. The Pukes are still going strong but I often wonder if 20 men on ukes playing punk songs would have the same novelty appeal of 20 women. People, usually men, would be genuinely surprised that we could all actually play our instruments and weren't just miming.

PORNOGRAPHY IS HATRED OF WOMEN

WOMEN'S BODIES ARE NOT OFFENSIVE THE OFFENCE IS THAT THEY ARE USED AS OBJECTS FOR MEN TO LOOK AT, TO MASTURBATE OVER AND TO ABUSE WHENEVER AND HOWEVER THEY CHOOSE.

PORN SHOWS WOMEN BEING USED BY MEN, EVER-WILLING WOMEN PERFORM ACTS WHILE MEN WATCH, OR MEN USE THE SEX ACT TO SHOW THEIR POWER AND DOMINATION OVER WOMEN.

MEN'S SEXUAL FEELINGS ARE OFTEN COMPLETELY SEPARATE FROM THEIR EMOTIONS- HOW ELSE COULD THERE BE SUCH A MARKET FOR "DEEP-THROAT DEBBIE" BLOW-UP DOLLS?-MEN CAN USE THEM AS RECEPTACLES FOR THEIR SPERM WITHOUT HAVING TO SHOW ANY CARING FEELINGS TOWARDS THEM. IN THE SAME WAY MANY MEN TREAT WOMEN AS IF THEY WERE BLOW-UP DOLLS WITHOUT FEELINGS.

IT IS ONLY AN EXTENSION OF THIS ATTITUDE THAT LEADS TO MEN RAPING AND BATTERING WOMEN AND CHILDREN, OFTEN THEIR OWN MARRIAGE MEANS THAT THE WOMAN IS OWNED BY HER HUSBAND, AND IT IS HIS CHOICE WHETHER TO TREAT HER AS A HUMAN BEING OR NOT.

PORNOGRAPHY, HOWEVER "MILD", IS A SYMPTOM OF OUR WOMAN-HATING SOCIETY. GETTING RID OF PORNOGRAPHY WILL NOT STOP WOMAN-HATING. TO DO THAT WE MUST GET RID OF PATRIARCHY- MEN'S POWER OVER WOMEN. BUT IN THE MEANTIME, WOMEN SHOULD NOT HAVE TO BE SURROUNDED BY ELATANT EVIDENCE OF MEN'S HATRED TOWARDS THEM.



**DISCHARGE**

**THE MOB**

**SUB HUMAN**

**SUNDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> MAY 1981**  
**BOWES LYON HOUSE ST. GEORGES WAY,**  
**STEVENAGE.**  
**MEMBERS £1.50**  
**NON-MEMBERS £1.75 7.30-11.00pm**



## NOTES WRITTEN ON A TATTERED PAGE

**Nick Hydra**

(With apologies to HPL and REH)

*A broken cog in the wheels of time  
When Reason's lost and thought is crime  
Serried legions march on line  
And none dare stand alone*

*The Blind Ones hatch their twisted schemes  
The headman's axe is swift and keen  
And in the citadel of broken dreams  
Stands a temple built of bones*

*Where fear holds sway and dread is king  
Murder circles on a jet black wing  
Devils shudder, sick of sin  
And Madness sits enthron'd  
Song of the Black Stone*

### **A note from the editor:**

Reproduced below are extracts from a journal which covers a period from mid-1935 to November 1936. Several pages have been defaced or excised, among them any that would have identified the author, and an attempt seems to have been made to destroy the entire volume by means of a fire.

I had the journal from someone who had no business to give it to me, or to any other. How he came by it he would not say, and he refused any payment for it, seeming relieved to have it out of his possession. I have no reason to believe that the journal is itself a forgery: although I will leave it to the readers to draw their own conclusions as to its contents.

I have confined myself to correcting minor errors of spelling and grammar, removing passages that do not relate directly to the matter at hand such as household accounts and comments on the weather as one would expect to be the day-to-day business of a respectable country gentleman. I have also added limited explanatory notes.

The first entry begins mid-paragraph (the previous several pages having been removed) and is consequently undated. Both the identity of the author, and the exact nature and origin of the artefacts to which he refers, remain a mystery.

### **(date unknown)**

[...] the tattered remains languishing in d'Boyle's care, subject to the vagaries of the Spanish weather and insect life, and more importantly, what other priceless material might be quietly putrefying into humus in the deceptively bucolic Iberian countryside.

This pernicious thought has taken root in my already over-stimulated imagination and I am plagued by feverish dreams in which I observe unseen as dim figures creep



and squirm amid accumulations of priceless documents. On some nights, the figures seem to somehow divine my surveillance and cast about as if searching for some tangible sign of my presence with a malign and inhuman consciousness.

**14<sup>th</sup> December 1935**

After interminable months with nerves frayed to breaking point, I can stand no more. I have communicated my concerns regarding the parlous state of his storage facilities to d'Boyle, expressing the fervent wish that that any and all archive material should be preserved for the nation, or at the very least be retrieved from their current resting place and displayed in his well-appointed library.

I refrained from expressing my actual wish – that he pass guardianship of this invaluable document to myself, so that I can provide it with the care it so deserves.

Although he appears to be in good health, d'Boyle is no longer a young man and has made no mention of family. In the event of his death I am concerned that an executor might sell to a private collector, or worse, not recognising its importance, dispose of the manuscript entirely.

**4<sup>th</sup> January 1936**

Despite my silence as to my true intentions, d'Boyle apparently sensed the subtle plea encoded in my seemingly neutral communication and has sent me a reply by return of post.

Maddeningly, the wording is tantalisingly vague; implying that he is prepared to surrender the manuscript to me; even hinting that there are other pieces – but leaving room for subtle doubts as to his true intentions to worm their way into my soul.

Here is a dilemma indeed! Should I press the point in hope of a positive outcome, or will a clumsy approach cause the notoriously unpredictable antiquarian to break off all contact with me, as he has done with so many others?

Paralysed by indecision, I have resigned myself to interminable nights of fitful, dream-haunted sleep and days of crawling unease.

**27<sup>th</sup> May 1936**

Finally, after months of uncertainty, I have received a telegram from d'Boyle! His brief message has filled me with elation. The manuscript in question is even now winging its way to me across the Atlantic.

**10<sup>th</sup> June 1936**

Words cannot describe the torment of these final few days; to have the object of my obsession so nearly within my grasp, yet still tantalisingly out of reach is a veritable agony of anticipation. I have not slept more than a few hours, and I have no appetite for either food or company.

**25<sup>th</sup> June 1936**

The package has arrived! Even without the exotic postage stamps affixed to the anterior face, I would have known it at a glance by the cramped, spidery hand that inscribed my address.

Suppressing my excitement, I turned the object over in my hands, breathlessly poring over its every detail. It was wrapped in what I took to be a kind of oilskin, bound with a peculiarly pliable twine, and sealed with a waxen stamp, the design of which was curiously suggestive of both a stylised human foetus and ancient Taoist symbols.

Finally, I broke the seal with a trembling hand, and removed the object of so many of my hopes, fears and puzzled conjectures.

I had known that the passage of the centuries had caused serious damage to the manuscript, but I was hopelessly unprepared for the condition of the artefact I now held gingerly in my hands. Tissue thin, and dried to a peculiarly fragile consistency, it appeared ready to disintegrate at my merest touch.

Now that I had it in my possession at last, I was perturbed to realise that my initial excitement had given way to certain nervousness, which could only be partially explained by its delicate condition. There was something disquieting about the aura of remotest antiquity that clung to the parchment. I quickly scanned the markings which consisted of repeated rings or discs encircling what were clearly words, somewhat in the style of an Egyptian cartouche but the glyphs were unfamiliar to me.

Suppressing a shudder, I turned my attention to more practical matters and transferred the fragile papyrus to the acid and moisture free environment I had previously prepared to receive it. Notwithstanding my precautions, I doubted my amateur efforts would be sufficient to preserve its integrity for long.

Having deposited the precious manuscript, I turned my attention to the smaller package which nestled within the oilskin wrapping. I gingerly removed its contents, which consisted of several circular metal brooches or coins of surprisingly detailed design, roughly one inch in diameter.

All were marked with symbols that bore an unmistakable similarity to those on the manuscript, and several mirrored its ring or disc design, while the remainder respectively depicted the figure of a young child in an attitude of supplication or perhaps agony, an abstract design resembling a human figure, a stylised animal skull from which rays projected, suggesting the emanation of some unknown power, and a slightly larger example somewhere between a square and a circle with a stern, obviously humanoid face. Based on the relative size of this last object in comparison to the others, I took it to be a representation of the god worshipped by the long-dead culture that had produced these remarkable objects.

Casting about for a suitable receptacle to house these fascinating artefacts, my eyes fell upon the case in which I displayed a collection of coins salvaged from the ruins of Colchis. Unceremoniously depositing the contents of the case in my bureau drawer, I placed the strange brooch-like objects under the glass cover pending further examination.

Having secured these relatively intact specimens, I turned my attention once more to the delicate problem of the preservation and possible restoration of the manuscript.

Wracking my brain for a solution to this new and unexpected predicament, my immediate thoughts were of Professor Angell of Brown University, Providence and



Henry Armitage, the esteemed librarian of Miskatonic University, Arkham. I have sent enquiries to both these august gentlemen and await their reply with some anticipation.

**9<sup>th</sup> July 1936**

My enquiries have met with disappointment. I have learned that Professor Angell died of apparent heart failure some years previously, and the enquiries I made of Armitage were similarly thwarted when I was informed that he had recently retired citing ill-health brought on by a particularly strenuous field expedition.

Although this setback is a bitter blow, I am undeterred. I am resolved to cast my net wider and make enquiries amongst the international community of scholars and artists I have previously corresponded with in the course of my esoteric research.

**20<sup>th</sup> July 1936**

Despite my best efforts, I am at a loss to decipher the text. Although there are certain elements that are suggestive of an ancient predynastic Egyptian script, I can find no record of any language close enough in construction to the fragments I have before me to allow me to unlock the puzzle.

I have, however identified a pattern in the designs. Each circle has within it two separate passages, the first passage being different to each of the other circles, but the second passage is identical in every case.

This leads me to believe the script is some form of poem or prayer, with the repeated phrase being either a name or a form of ritualised response. But as to the nature of the prayer, or what strange deity is being addressed I remain at a loss.

**10<sup>th</sup> September 1936**

A name has been recommended to me by Alia Syed, whose strange elfin beauty, as much as the disturbing dream-like symbolism of her film Panopticon: Missive I had caused such a sensation when she exhibited in Moscow during the winter of 1915. Syed had cause to consult with Rachael House of the Tate Gallery, London in her role of chief archivist during research which related to the previous use of the Tate site as a prison.

**17<sup>th</sup> September 1936**

I must set down all that occurred while it is fresh in my memory, in an effort to understand the terrifying visions that assailed me. Dear God, am I once more losing my mind?

I had arranged to meet with House in a hostelry adjacent to her place of work. I arrived early, having taken the train to Charing Cross and as the weather was fine, walked West along the Thames to my destination. The inn was strangely quiet given its central location and proximity to both an underground station and a major public gallery, with the patrons being mostly of a low, brutish type. Despite the mildness of the late summer evening, there was a distinct chill in the room which a roaring fire did little to dispel. Business being slow, I fell into idle conversation with the landlord.

He revealed that the building (as did the Tate Gallery itself) rested atop a warren of underground passages that had previously been part of the old Millbank Prison.

I was taken aback by this information, given the distance from the gallery and what I had taken to be the size of the gaol. I mentioned my surprise to the landlord, who explained the Millbank site had been much larger than I had imagined, being built as it had to be a national prison, housing not only ordinary criminals, but later those doomed to transportation to the colonies, the tunnels beneath his establishment being used to move these lost souls to the ships which carried them to the antipodes, indenture, and almost certain death.

According to the landlord, the area was long notorious for weird happenings. No less than two separate architects had taken on and then abandoned the task of construction, despite the prestigious and financially rewarding nature of the contract, and the conditions in the prison had been harsh even by the standards of the time, as the innumerable unmarked graves in the prison burial ground had mutely testified. In 1823 the entire population of convicts and guards had been evacuated for several months. Newspaper reports of the time referred to a mysterious epidemic that swept through the prison, but local legend spoke of a horrifying tide of death and lunacy, somehow linked to an attempted escape via the system of tunnels.

Clearly relishing the opportunity to regale a new ear with an oft-told tale, he expanded on his theme, suggesting that the tunnels pre-dated the construction of the penitentiary in 1816, and even the Roman occupation of London. He hinted darkly that the Latin invaders had started work shoring up and repairing what were even then ancient structures, until a deeper level had been discovered, following which the passageways had been suddenly abandoned and all entrances hastily sealed.

When Boadicea descended on London with fire and sword the Iceni conducted grisly rites on the banks of the Thames where the entrances lay, but otherwise left the caverns undisturbed, suggesting the sacrifices served to contain, rather than worship or appease whatever powers lurked in the depths.

A stolid, unimaginative man, the landlord gave no indication of being affected by the grim reputation of the subterranean chambers beneath his feet, confessing to storing his barrels in a small section still accessible from the pub cellar. He joked that several of his barmaids could not be induced to venture below due to reported ghost sightings, but displayed a baffled irritation when he recalled his inability to retain competent staff for any length of time, and the difficulties he had in securing regular supplies of beer owing to numerous draymen refusing to deliver to his premises.

At any other time, I would have enjoyed this macabre history, admired my host's skilful weaving together of fact, fiction and folklore, and applauded his attempts to attract customers with his fanciful tale, but his words filled me with a strange foreboding.

He seemed on the verge of offering to show me the place where the apparition was most usually sighted, but I was spared this further ordeal by the arrival of Miss House. Thanking the landlord for his tale with a half crown, I managed to adopt the appearance of a bluff cynic scoffing at the credulity of more naive souls, but as I



joined the archivist at a table in the rear of the establishment my hand trembled as I set down my drink.

I took the opportunity to observe my companion as we exchanged pleasantries. She wore a jacket and mid-length skirt of tweed, with her hair cut short and pulled back from her face. Heavy spectacles framed eyes which were inky black and glittered with a strange zeal.

Glancing quickly around, she leant forward and without a word traced a design on the table-top with a wine-wet finger, immediately erasing it with a sweep of her hand in one sinuous movement. Although I had seen it for an instant only, I recognised it as part of the repeated phrase from the manuscript and metal discs, and I felt again that gnawing unease that has gripped me of late whenever I examine the strange artefacts.

My disquiet must have shown on my face, for House leant back in her chair with an expression of triumph. *"So he has parted with them at last!"* she exclaimed.

*"He would only allow me the merest glimpse of the amulets, and only hinted at the existence of the invocation itself."*

She looked at me keenly; *"d'Boyle refused every offer I made, what could you possibly have that he would want?"*

Seeing no reason to dissemble, I explained how the pieces had come into my possession, and my theories concerning their origin. She was clearly surprised by my story, but showed no inclination to disbelieve me. Lost in thought, she spoke more to herself than to me. *"To give them away... when they are all but priceless..."* Suddenly she checked herself. *"What will you take for them?"*

Although I was growing increasingly concerned about the nature of my acquisition, I had resolved that were I to dispose of them, they would go to a museum rather than a private collector, and I would give them as I had received them, free from the taint of any financial consideration.

As I explained my decision to House, her pale face darkened, and she started from her seat with a muttered oath. For a second I felt sure that she would reach across the table and strike me, such was the passion that gripped her. *"You fool!"* she hissed, *"You know nothing of what you possess! Egypt?! That language was lost and forgotten millennia before the first Egyptians grovelled in supplication before their crocodile god! Before Stygia, before Acheron, before Atlantis and Valusia rose and fell, that incantation was used to worship beings that hold dominion over the nine realms!"*

She checked herself again, as I drew back from the ferocity of her ejaculations.

Noticing that the room had fallen silent, and that the landlord was regarding us with a mixture of alarm and suspicion, she contained her fury with a visible effort, and managed to smile sweetly at me, reaching out to caress my arm as she sank back into her chair. Witnessing what they took to be the end of a lover's quarrel, the few patrons lost interest in our conversation, although the landlord kept a jaundiced eye fixed on us.

House had regained some composure, although her eyes burned like coals behind her severe black spectacles. Placing her palms flat on the table top, she continued in an oddly flat tone, occasionally licking her lips in a quick, nervous gesture that I found strangely repugnant.

*"You must forgive me; I have been seeking examples of these inscriptions for many years, and am apt to become agitated on the subject. We each have our foibles I suppose."*

She forced a grating laugh, which I found more unnerving than her previous outburst, issuing as it did from her mirthless, thin-lipped mouth.

She went on to describe the origin of the artefacts, which she referred to as votive objects of an ancient race that had worshipped beings known as They Who May Not Be Named millennia ago. All traces of this civilisation had been wiped from the face of the earth by some cataclysmic event in the mist of pre-history, although whether natural or man-made she could not say.

House believed that despite having sunk into savagery, a degenerate remnant of this once mighty race endured in the wilds of Tibet, the worship of their strange gods persisting only in a debased form.

As I listened to her fantastic tale, I became convinced that she was quite mad; yet however much I sought to stand and leave, I found myself unable to rise, lost as I was in the vista that she described. I seemed to glimpse a world beyond this one, dimly perceived as if through ocean depths, where strange shapes moved, uttering terrible names before blasphemous altars.

As House continued in a low even tone, an unnatural torpor stole over me until I was unable to stir, aware only of her piercing black eyes and the white flash of teeth against her red lips. I could no longer distinguish her words, just the low drone of her voice rising and falling in a soporific rhythm.

I was sure that I was in mortal peril, but this realisation seemed unimportant, as long as I could continue to listen to that low voice and stare into those ink-black eyes. She stretched out her hand, and as if in a dream, I saw myself grasp the valise containing the precious artefacts and begin to pass it to her.

As House reached out, she brushed my hand with her fingers; they were icy cold, and the sudden shock brought me partway to my senses. With a convulsive effort, I tore my gaze from hers and clutched the valise to my chest. Lurching to my feet so abruptly that my chair overturned with a clatter, I made a blundering rush for the door, gaining it and the street beyond more by luck than skill. Perhaps sensible that all eyes were upon her, House made no move to follow.

I set off blindly along the banks of the river, attempting to shake the malaise that gripped me. A pea-souper had come up, and for a moment I was unable to orient myself. Tendrils of fog coiled and writhed against the street lamps, mixing with the foul miasma that rose from the foetid waters of the Thames. As their feeble light strove to penetrate the suffocating grey blanket, it shimmered with a malign prism of unearthly blues and greens. It was not until I heard Big Ben striking ten



in the distance that I realised that I was directly opposite the entrance to the Tate Gallery. Slick with precipitation, the white facade gleamed like bone in the street lights, as the great bell tolled on like the voice of some monster spirit singing the funeral dirge of Time.

What strange madness had caused Henry Tate to choose this position for his museum? His great wealth was the result of success in the sugar business, but those very same riches were inextricably entwined with the foul trade in human souls from the shores of Africa to the plantations of the Americas. In his efforts to expiate the dark stain on his soul had he unwittingly constructed his gift to the nation on the very foundations of an edifice used to warehouse prisoners whose fate so closely mirrored that of those African slaves?

I felt a surge of sympathy for those poor wretches, their last sight of England the dank tunnels below me. I could almost picture their desperate expressions and despairing cries as they were dragged in chains to the waiting ships through those hellish passages.

I had seen my share of horrors in the late war, and have killed without compunction, but a wave of revulsion shook me as I pictured the cruelties inflicted in the name of British justice; naught but privilege and naked greed draped in the flag of empire and commerce.

I had watched the same forces lead a generation to the charnel house not ten years before; and now the storm clouds were gathering again, ready to drag Europe into another maelstrom of butchery.

It was inconceivable that Tate had been unaware of the recent history of the site, but had he known the dark legends related to me by the publican? An awful doubt stole over me, chilling in its implications. Could Tate's choice of location have been deliberate? What baleful influence had drawn him and those before him to this cursed spot? What did he know of that which lurked in those lower levels, sealed and abandoned since Roman times?

I had long been a student of myth and legend, but merely as a tool to understand the artefacts of the long-dead cultures that so intrigued me. Just hours earlier I would have dismissed as arrant nonsense any suggestion that an ancient evil coiled in the depths of the earth, but standing on that lonely street wreathed in fog, I began to doubt my previous certainty.

Glancing around, I was unnerved to realise that the riverbank was completely deserted, with not even the distant rumble of an omnibus to break the eerie stillness. Suddenly, I needed to be away from this dismal place and among the bustle of the great metropolis. I hastened with as much alacrity as my twisted back and shattered leg would allow towards Westminster and the busy Charing Cross terminus beyond, not slackening my pace until I had crossed Lambeth Bridge and emerged into a small park.

Feeling faint, I leant on the stonework and gazed into the murky depths of the mist shrouded river. From below came a sullen splash, as if a large fish had breached the surface of the water, and I idly tried to pierce the gloom to identify its source. Unable

to penetrate the dense barrier shrouding my view, I listened intently, striving to catch any further occurrence. To my right, a set of broad stone steps descended, and it was from where I estimated their lowest extent would make contact with the water that the noise had come.

As I waited, a wallowing gurgle struck my ears, followed by a stealthy rasp as if something were quietly dragging itself out of the water. As I stood frozen in horror, a dreadful wet slithering told me that something was crawling towards me up the steps, and I knew with an awful certainty that whatever might be ascending through the murk it was no earthly beast, but a shape out of nightmare intent on my destruction.

Starting back in terror, I lurched into a stumbling run, heedless of the white-hot bolts of pain that shot up my leg with each step. Behind me I heard again that hellish slither not made by any human foot as something emerged at street level. Instinctively, I knew that to turn back and glimpse that dreadful form would mean the annihilation of my sanity. Despite my infirmity, I redoubled my efforts to escape my foul pursuer, until the blood sang in my ears and I was fairly reeling in headlong flight.

Suddenly a dark shape blocked my path and with an incoherent cry I raised my stick in a desperate attempt to ward off my assailant. A strong hand grasped my wrist, another my shoulder and I found myself staring into the angry face of a London policeman. In my panic I had almost collided with one of the many guardians that patrol the perimeter of the parliament buildings.

The lights were more numerous there, and I could see Victoria Street busy with traffic. Such was my relief at the sight of the teeming multitudes that all my strength left me; only the grip of my saviour preventing me from collapsing to the pavement.

He gruffly demanded if I was aware of the penalties associated with assaulting a police officer, and what my business was. Barely able to speak, I gestured feebly the way I had come and stammered something which made him understand I was fleeing for my life. Doubtless reckoning that I was pursued by no more than common street criminals, he cautioned me not to move and made to step into the fog.

With a desperate cry I grasped his shoulder. *"For the love of god, man, do not leave me here alone!"*

He sought to shrug me off with an impatient gesture, but I clung to him with the last reserves of my strength. He hesitated, torn between his duty to offer me aid and his eagerness to tackle the thieves he believed he faced. He regarded me keenly, and with a start I realised that he suspected I might not be in my right mind.

If I should be arrested, my previous incarceration as a result of war neurosis would soon be discovered. I might be held pending medical examination, or worse; returned to Ravenscar. I would be held overnight in a police cell at the very least. I could not bear to be in any enclosed space, and the thought that I would be held in such a place under the earth filled me with a sick crawling terror.

With a supreme effort of will, I controlled my jangling nerves, and summoned something of the authority that that had once inspired men to follow me into the teeth of slaughter.



Drawing myself up to my full height, I looked him squarely in the face. He was young; almost as young as I had been when I enlisted in 1914, and used to taking orders from men older than himself. Brushing myself down with the embarrassed air of a man who knows he has made himself look foolish, I assured him that I was fully recovered, and that the footpads that had menaced me had surely fled as soon as they saw his uniform.

Without giving him time to question me further, or realise that he should detain me at least long enough to take a statement, I moved as briskly as I could towards Whitehall.

I left him there, still uneasily scanning the surrounding darkness. I felt he would be safe enough if he remained at his station; whatever it was that lurked in the fog seemed unable to endure the light, but I prayed he would resist the urge to search for my fictitious assailants.

I made my way to Charing Cross without further incident, and to my relief a train was waiting on the platform as I arrived. I threw myself into the first available seat, oblivious to the startled glances my dishevelled appearance drew from my fellow travellers. I imagine they thought me drunk, and I did not disabuse them.

Staring out of the window at the dark, nervously chewing my knuckles, I did not properly relax until I was carried far from the fog-shrouded city, and the sprawling suburbs had given way to clean green fields.

As I sit here in my library, transcribing the incredible events of this evening, I am fixed upon one conclusion – the objects are accursed. Von Junst hinted of it, and more; I have his infernal tome open upon my desk, seeking in vain for some way out of this trap but the deliberate vagueness of his words coupled with the incomplete and questionable translation of the Bridewell edition offer only baffling hints. He refers to beings known as The Nameless Ones, but whether they and the abominations House referred to as They Who May Not Be Named are one and the same, I do not know. Would that I had it in the original German! One thing is clear; I cannot simply dispose of the parchment, else I would cast it instantly in the fire.

My leg is aching damnably, and Venables, taciturn as ever, has placed a sleeping draught at my elbow. Despite my physician's warnings against an over-reliance on the soothing balm of morphia, I care not. I know that no nightmares of suffocating in the earth will wake me this night.

**18<sup>th</sup> September 1936**

A dreamless sleep has restored my nerves, and a hearty breakfast followed by my morning constitutional has similarly restored my physical being, although I am still noticeably affected by my exertions. However strange my experience of the previous evening may have seemed, I am resolved to make sense of the night's events in the hard light of reason. I must not let my melancholia drag me back into the dark waters in which I have spent so many years.

What strange power had House exerted over me? I had appeared to be hypnotised, but could not my experiences be more easily be explained by the administration of

some narcotic? It would have been simple enough for her to slip such a thing into my drink. It would certainly explain my disordered mental state.

Her wild tale of forgotten gods was lunacy of course; but my already fragile psyche, when coupled with the publican's far-fetched account of a diabolic labyrinth under the Millbank Prison had served to make me suggestible to such notions. The hypnotic effect of the drug and my horror of enclosed spaces had done the rest.

A London fog is an eerie environment for an out of town visitor unused to their clammy embrace, and with my mind confused I had allowed my imagination to run away with me. The fish had been, simply, a fish, and the sound I had heard on the steps had doubtless been caused by some large piece of flotsam coming into contact with the stones as it was carried downstream by the current.

In the cold light of day it is clear that the artefacts though indubitably ancient, hold no more power to cause harm than the fetish stick of a Juju Man. Any uneasiness I feel when handling the articles is entirely within my own mind.

This realisation however, does not bring me any closer to solving the conundrum of how I might effect their preservation. Still, I must put aside these esoteric affairs for the moment; the management of the estate has been ignored long enough, and I must turn my attention to more prosaic matters.

**20<sup>th</sup> September 1936**

Venables has reported a singular occurrence. The rats and other vermin which are a fact of life of any country estate and have hitherto been kept in check only by the attentions of my faithful hound Peggy seem to have entirely abandoned the area. Venables is at a loss to explain this strange absence, as is the local veterinarian.

**30<sup>th</sup> September 1936**

The staff are increasingly nervous, and the lack of animal life in the fields and hedgerows surrounding the estate causes dark mutterings of a Hex among the villagers. Spared the attentions of the usual pests, the crop promises to be bountiful this year, but Venables indicates that he may have to hire day-labourers from surrounding areas come harvest time, due to the almost unanimous disinclination of the local workforce to enter the fields.

**8<sup>th</sup> October 1936**

I fear the nervous exhaustion that led to my incapacitation in previous years is upon me once more. I have again been subject to the strangest imaginings.

While taking my regular early morning stroll, I found myself walking among the small copse adjacent to the top field, when I was struck by the eerie stillness.

There seemed to be no movement of any kind in the undergrowth, no fox or badger retreating from the unwarranted intrusion of man into their woodland world, not even a beetle stirred in the leaf litter carpeting the ground.

Stopping for a moment to catch my breath, I leant on my stick, watching as Peggy circled back and forth, casting about for some scent or other. Gradually, I became cognizant of the almost total lack of bird song.



Usually, the raucous scolding of Crows would have greeted my approach, and although the various smaller birds in the immediate vicinity of my progress would fall silent, there should have been a constant chatter from those at a safer distance.

Puzzled, I scanned the skyline, and noted the expected concentration of birds in flight on the far horizon at a distance of five miles or so. But as I turned to survey the estate, nestled in the bottom of the valley, I was perturbed to note that as far as I could see was an empty expanse of sky; devoid of movement of any kind.

Suddenly, the unnatural silence seemed to hold within it a palpable threat, and I felt a chill that had little to do with the early morning damp. Before the urge to move had registered in my mind, I realised I was progressing down the steep track that led away from the copse at a velocity unwise in a man of my uncertain footing. With considerable effort, I managed to control my mounting panic and slowed to a pace more conducive to safety. Calling hoarsely to Peggy, who seemed unwilling at first to forsake the spoor she had discovered, I hurried back to the house, fighting the urge to run (although run from what, I could not say), my skin crawling with the awful certainty that I was observed from the depths of the copse.

When Peggy finally abandoned her search for whatever quarry had piqued her interest, the sight of her trotting at my side restored my confidence somewhat; however I did not see fit to reduce my pace until I had bolted the stout oaken door behind me.

Limping heavily, I made my way to the library and collapsed into the large wing-backed chair which I favour when reading. I had rarely imbibed alcohol during my marriage due to my dear wife's very definite views on the matter, and even since she succumbed to the Spanish Influenza I have continued my abstinence out of respect for her memory. Nonetheless, and regardless of the earliness of the hour, I poured myself a generous measure of brandy and downed it hurriedly.

Somewhat revived by the warming spirit, I poured myself another glass and sat with it cupped between my trembling hands, struggling to contain the dread that gripped my soul.

Peggy, sensible of my consternation owing to some canine sixth sense, laid her head in my lap and regarded me with a concerned and baffled expression. Looking into those faithful eyes, mutely offering me succour was too much for my overstretched nerves, and I felt the shameful sting of a tear on my cheek.

Venables, curious at my early return, knocked and as was his habit, entered without waiting for a reply. Taken aback by the sight that greeted him, he started toward me and seemed about to speak, but the years we have spent together told him that I craved only seclusion. He withdrew, contriving to find duties in other parts of the house to occupy him for the rest of the day.

[Editor's note: The entries become more erratic from here, with many crossings out and other scribbled amendments. The chronological gaps between the entries increase, and it is this section of the journal most affected by fire damage, resulting in the loss of several pages and rendering some passages unreadable.]

**October 28<sup>th</sup> 1936**

Fool that I was, so eagerly accepting the tainted gift of the old schemer d'Boyle. Well he knew what was passed to me along with the manuscript. "...if a man should willingly accept", so read the passage, but I was too blind, too eager to possess that tattered parchment to heed the warning of [Editor's note: a word has been obscured here, although it is obviously a name].

**10<sup>th</sup> November 1936**

The servants have fled; only Venables remains, although I have implored him to leave. Loyal to the last, his only answer was to grin like a wolf and continue to lay out the fearsome arsenal he has amassed on our travels. We have retreated to the library and the adjacent section of the house which retain stout walls of Norman design. The lamps burn day and night and we stand alternate watch through the hours of darkness, subsisting on the contents of the larder eaten cold from the tin.

We should flee for our lives; the road is still passable in daylight, and my roadster sits waiting in the drive, but the objects exert some abnormal power over me. I cannot leave though it mean my life, and Venables will not abandon me.

**11<sup>th</sup> November 1936**

I hear Venables pacing the corridors, shotgun in hand, though I doubt that such earthly precautions will be of any succour against the doom that stalks the night, always searching, searching to find a means of ingress. I thank God for the foresight of the unknown ancestor who constructed the foundations beneath me of good solid stone. Yet I fear; I fear. I must consult [...]

**(date unknown)**

[...] despite my best efforts, exhaustion overtook me last night, and Venables chose to let me sleep; I was woken abruptly from my slumber by the blast of the shotgun and Peggy's frantic bark. Venables must have ventured outside in his desire to come to grips with the unseen enemy that has besieged us for so many days and nights.

In the moments that followed I heard Peggy's snarling howl, and a cry of terror from Venables, followed by the slamming of the great oak door. I started up, resolving to save my comrade if I could, or share in whatever doom had overtaken him, when my ears caught a scratching and rustling that made my blood run cold. How many must there now be to be audible at such a distance? Unless they were within the cellars of the house! As the horror of this possibility struck home, my sense reeled, all thoughts of my friend and comrade of twenty years were forgotten, and I fell forward in a dead faint.

The morning sun has brought some semblance of calm to my disordered mind, although how I retained my sanity during those dark hours I cannot explain.

We are safe for the moment. Their loathing of the daylight keeps them subdued even in the darkness of the cellars. But we shall not survive another night.

Venables is a broken man; despite having stood unflinching amongst the carnage of the Western Front, the merest glimpse of the horror that crawled and writhed in the



darkness beyond the door has shattered his mind. He is no longer sensible of this world, and I almost envy him his madness.

When the end comes I doubt he will know it, but I have my service revolver cradled in my lap, and he will not suffer at the last. Precious good though the heavy Webley will be against the terror that even now creeps and slithers beneath the floor, its familiar weight is reassuring, and I have cartridges enough for what must be done.

I think it will be Peggy that I will find the hardest. Scant reward for such a loyal companion that even now paces and growls, eager to defend me, as if that which menaces us were some rabbit or squirrel that she could chase down and dispatch.

Suddenly it struck me! "...if a man should willingly accept" House! By God! She had been desperate to acquire the relics! But still I hesitated. She was clearly interested in the pieces for her own dark purpose, and her possession of them could spell only disaster if she succeeded in her insane design.

Desperately I glanced from the wreck of the man who had been my closest friend to the hound that stalked with hackles aloft around the perimeter of the room. I knew that both would willingly sacrifice their lives to defend mine. I could not abandon them to the fate that in my folly I had brought down on us all.

I stared for a moment at the portrait of my dear Isobel. Would she understand? Would she forgive my desperate actions? A stealthy movement from below drove these questions from my mind. No matter that my soul be damned for my infamy, I must save my companions if I can.

I have telephoned House. She is driving down from London and should arrive well before nightfall. In her eagerness to possess their awful power she has not questioned the change of heart which has led me to part with my cursed possessions, as I did not suspect d'Boyle's motives in passing them to me.

The die is cast. May God forgive me.

Editor's note: The narrative ceases abruptly with the last of the entries reproduced here.

No mention of a Professor or Doctor d'Boyle can be found in any of the standard reference works in which a man of his eminence might be expected to merit an entry, leading many to believe that the name used throughout is in fact, a pseudonym. Some researchers have tentatively linked a certain Professor Robins known to have lived in Spain at the relevant time to 'd'Boyle'; however, while Professor Robins still lives, all enquiries regarding this issue have met with vehement denials and threats of libel action. No other persons identified by name survive.

**Post script:**

Readers may be interested the contents of some documents found folded within the pages of the journal.

The first is a series of articles printed in *The South London Press* during February 1937, concerning the death of a Miss Rachel House, lately employed as archivist at the Tate Gallery in London, whose mutilated body was found in the collapsed ruins of her home in East Dulwich. The coroner's inquest noted that the body was marked by injuries that went far beyond those normally associated with an accident of this kind, and although House was known to have come into possession of an object or objects of significant value prior to her death which were not recovered from the property, as the wounds were not inflicted by any recognisable weapon an open verdict was reluctantly recorded.

The second is a page from the January 1937 Sotherby's Catalogue of Sale concerning a parchment and a group of 12 iron brooches thought to be East African in origin.

Most of the records relating to this period having been lost during the Blitz, enquiries at the auction house failed to reveal the name of the vendor. However, it was established that the items in question were never sold at auction having been withdrawn from sale. Although certain parties attached to the German Embassy were known to have made repeated enquiries regarding them, their current whereabouts remain unknown.

The only pictorial depiction of the items is a small photograph printed in the catalogue of sale, which is reproduced below.



**Afterword: (or: No Good Deed Goes Unpunished).**

I got to 'know' Gary Lance Robins/ Lance d'Boyle via emails and Facebook messages when I was working on the badges to go with the recent 'Persons Unknown' release. He very thoughtfully donated the remains of the damaged artwork (which he designed) and a handful of original badges to me, after only very gentle hints on my part.

I initially began the story as a factual account of the process that led to me ending up with the original artwork, and my efforts to preserve it. However, with the deadline looming and no actual end in sight, it started to take on a life of its own.

Originally, sparked by the semi-humorous line *"even hinting that there are other pieces which may yet be rescued from the mandibles of the ravening termite horde"* and the fact that I had found it impossible up to then to actually get anyone to even look at the artwork, let alone do anything to preserve it (I'm not saying dark forces conspire against me, but They Who May Not Be Named have a powerful reach, even now), the straightforward setting down of facts mutated into a Cthulhu Mythos tale in the style of H.P. Lovecraft (or more accurately, Robert E. Howard writing in the style of H.P. Lovecraft).

Typically, as the story progressed (and it pretty much wrote itself), I deleted every mention of termites, which originally referred to the damage inflicted by the said Isoptera\* on the original artwork while it sat in Lance's shed.

There are various references to other writer's works which I like to think I have inserted subtly to amaze and delight the more discerning reader but are probably painfully obvious and embarrassing to the aficionado, and various real people (who I'd like to apologise to in advance) appear in semi-fictional disguise.

After I had sent the finished tale away to be included in this slim volume, Lance passed away in January 2017. As he also appears in the story, I seriously considered re-writing it entirely as there are some passages that may seem insensitive in light of recent events. On reflection, I decided that this would be a mistake. It may seem churlish to cruelly repay his immensely kind gift by making him the villain of the piece, but I'd like to think he'd have appreciated it.

Thanks (as ever) to no fucker.

\*Contrary to popular belief, termites are not ants, but are more closely related to cockroaches.







## TALES OF A TEENAGE PUNK

Andy Owen

### Living in Weston-Super-Mare.

Mid-80s and it was rough as fuck. An eye opener after living in Chippenham. Met some ace people there. Ripcord, Adz, Stella, Graham to name a few. Recently after more than 20 years I bumped into Rich Potts who lived with us down there for a while. Good to see him. He was the drummer in this band. Their album's artwork on *Under The Scalpel Blade* features drawings of punks some of which I think were WSM punks.

OK, This Takes Me Back to 85/86 I Think More Like 86.

I was squatting in London with a mate from WSM and some lads from Dublin. Wood Green it was. And this was the first time I saw this band. It was Conflict, AYS & Potential Threat. Well this opened my eyes. Brilliant gig. Conflict were hardcore and kicked ass. They didn't and still don't care what people think they just blast it out. Still going strong and gigging. Had some good times in Wood Green then I went squatting in Redditch and Birmingham. Back to Bristol then WSM again. Sounds shite but at that age with the people and bands I met I loved it. Look back on those days with fond memories. Bit violent at times but on the whole it was ace. Thanks Conflict. Looking forward to seeing you again. Soon!!

### Helen's, Victoria Park WSM.

16 kicked out of my parents and met some punks in Weston at the dole office. They were all 4 or 5 years older than me. Got chatting had a cider or 2 (proper stuff) and was told I could move into Helen's. This was a 3 storey house near Weston Woods. First time I entered the house it was sad. Helen's husband had just died and she and her youngest son were in bits. Matt her eldest was a punk. He was with us and told his mum I was moving in. He was a tough cookie. So up to the 3rd floor I went. In the room was Graham me and SPG the rat!! He roamed free and ruled the roost.

Next door was Sarah. Also a punk. She had a massive room. We had a tiny kitchen. Minging. And a sink that was permanently blocked (don't ask)! Pierced my nose over that sink and thought fuck how do I wash it. Ah I know, cider!! Well first night there was an excuse for a moving in party. Fair play to them. I'd only literally just met them. Well that night was my introduction to keep you up stuff. Spent all night chatting and drinking scrumpy. What a nice bunch. What a next day. Spent a while living there. This is an album that used to be played a lot. And Therapy is a fucking beauty. There will be more stories from here. Some funny some violent. But this is your introduction to Vic Park. And Matt A and Rich Potts will know and I discovered was a loose canon. I'm sure Sam Butler Terry and Ian Liversidge met him when I took them round his gaff before the infamous WSM gig (more to come on that one)! And my bedsit mate Graham if I remember rightly didn't you say Rich he's sadly no longer with us? So for Helen's and my WSM days I give you The Damned.



**During My Time in Weston. Alan & Rachel**

Moved to Canterbury St. A bedsit. A nice little weekend meeting point. Now I'm back in Chippenham more of a daily meeting point. Usual crowd used to gather there. Good times had by all. But... Something was changing. Now, I'm still bouncing off the walls listening to Dead Kennedys, Discharge Conflict etc. My punk rock mates were to a point but there unbranded tobacco was making them sit down more And drinking tea with fungi in it!! Well, me I was still on the piss shouting out Fuck The System. They are sat around quite happy to watch this numpty jumping about. The tobacco they had made them very happy it showed when they were watching me fart about. They had started to grow their hair a get a bit hippy-fied. Something I never embraced. But they are my mates (never forget your mates). So I used to listen to this new (old) music. Gong seemed to be a fave. Hawkwind another. They would tell me "*Lemmy was in Hawkwind*" to try and soften the blow. Nah not for me. Lemmy IS Motörhead. So our sessions round Canterbury St changed. Mellowed out so to speak. Not me though. I was still doing my thing, being me. No one minded (it's Andy being Andy). Perfect. This was the start of people changing. This was also the place that Alan & Rachel made me & Lee Provins very proud. We became God Fathers to their first born, Dan. What a special moment. Me being me and they gave me a responsibility. Proud beyond. So to those changing times and to the Hippies Gong. (sorry)!!!

**I'll Get the Wine Bar Bottle One Done.**

Ok this was a nasty one. 3 lads from Calne I think came in. At this time on the bar they had a basket with bottles of wine in. It was for the office workers at lunch mostly. Chris Lewis was working this day. It may of been when he ran it. These lads came in being boisterous and being a pain. So much so Pete O'Toole had a punch up with one of them. Anyhow things were getting a bit out of hand and they were told to leave. They wouldn't, so got told to fuck off. On doing so the cheeky fuckers nicked a bottle of red wine. Legged it out the door and over the bridge to the river. Chris made chase followed by me and Dave Blanchard maybe Pete as well. When we caught up with them they stood their ground. Chris just wanted the wine back. They wanted trouble. One with a motorbike helmet took a swipe at me with it. I dodged it. One was gobby. The other had the bottle behind his back. After shouting and shoving this lad cracked the bottle straight over Dave's head!! Nightmare. The noise was horrible. Red wine streaming down his face then blood loads of it. Chris had a white Cramps t-shirt on and immediately put it on Dave's face. The lads legged it. His cheek was split open like a door. Horrendous. Chris being calm and reassuring to Dave saying it wasn't too bad. That t-shirt was red now!! I've never seen anything like it. Don't want to again. Obviously Dave had to receive treatment. I think the lads were caught as well. I remember it being on the local radio news. Not sure if a conviction was made. Typical Chris again. So calm. And I know Dave needed that. I was in a right state. Frightening. I'll never forget that sound and his cheek. Horrible story. I think Dave lives in France now. Nice bloke. No one deserves to be attacked like that. Concrete Jungle, it ain't safe on the streets!!!

**Pubs**

Ok The Old Road. Scary to think it but I started drinking there in 1985. Ron Head and his wife ran it. Ron looked like Skeletor! Used to make us laugh that old boy.

When his missus turned his back he used to help himself to a short. Remember Mr & Mrs Guppy being regulars on a weekend amongst others. The Generals as we called them, they were the old boys in the corner playing cards. Nice blokes. Now we were new in their pub. Their local. They were a good bunch and we were polite and respectful. They liked that. When we first went in mohicans, spikey hair, Doc's chains etc they had a giggle but were sound. Ron had a rule if someone came in in a school uniform they had to take their tie off. Simple. We used to have a little tease with the blokes but they took it in good faith and gave it back. We were spending money. Ron loved it. He was pulling that many more pints I'm sure it was like a work out for him!! Well we hijacked the jukebox. Vera Lynn was off!! This was one of our favourites on there. Can't go wrong with a bit of Mode. For the Old Road old days and the very nice and kind regulars that took us in. This was really the start of the pub drinking days. I'll take you on a tour of the Chippenham pubs over the next few days.

**Gonna Go To WSM**

Chatting to Lee Gough last night while watching the excellent 50 SHADES OF PUNK at The Buttercross. Well he tells me his mum is an ex-skinhead from Weston, and bang on the right age for this story. So Weston. 2 notorious estates, The Bournville and The Old Mixon. 2 rough places (allegedly). They used to have their differences and sometimes settled it with a good old fashioned punch up. Now my mate Stella was a punk, a few Chipp people might remember him. He came here a few times. He looked like Vivian from *The Young Ones*. He was the nutter jumping off the Town Bridge!! So one time me and him were by the notorious Arcade strip in Weston. Just sat there having a cider (as you do) when suddenly we were surrounded by Skins. Shit. They were about my age 16/17. Well Punks and Skins didn't mix not like Chippenham. So they wanted to give us a kicking. Stella didn't give a fuck and was gobby. I was shitting it. About 10 of them. They were asking Stella if I was a girl. Say yes they might leave us alone. He says no, that's my mate Andy he's not scared. Fucking was. So then they started. All of a sudden an older Skin walked by and said alright Stella. Alright mate. The young Skins stopped in their tracks. "*You Stella*"? "*Yep*" "*Mountain and Daffy's brother*"? "*Yep*". That was the end of that. Now his brothers were members of The Squad. The Bournville Skinhead gang. Not only that they were the top boy's. These young lads knew not to fuck with the little brother. Hallelujah. So word spread. They were worried. So me and Stella went to the pub on the Bournville. Can't remember it's name. I'd never been in this boozer. It's reputation was infamous. I was panicking. Stella couldn't give a shit it was his manner. So walked in and it was like a Western (hence my music choice) everyone in the place stopped looked round and stared. Stella little mohican me gurt big mohican. Then someone went "*alright Stella*", job done were in. Nice blokes I found out. Now Mountain was like his namesake Daffy well stacked. A little word and a few ciders down the hatch and we're off. Stella's 'word' had resulted in the fact that these young Skins now knew who he was so that was enough to stop them starting again. These young un's wanted to make a name for themselves. Not with Stella they won't. So got away with a shoeing that day. For Stella The Squad and The Bournville Pub. Clint music.



**The Borough (Now The Gladstone)**

Over the road from The Bit On The Side. Another favourite for the Alternative Scene. Pre drinks pub before Diggers (if they had a decent band on). Good boozier this one. Used to get well packed. Lots of good bands back in our day played at Diggers, so this was well handy for meeting up. And meeting new people who came in to watch the bands. One of the times Bad Manners were to play. They popped in for a pint or two. Now Coundy was there. Getting on well with Buster. A little too well! Conspires that he got Buster so wasted that when they were due to go on stage he couldn't perform. He wasn't smoking Golden Virginia!! So they had to re-book. Good live band when they did play! So The Borough started to turn into more of a Skinhead pub. Not that it mattered we all still went, but on the whole it was their gaff. I loved the way they all looked. Smart as fuck. Doc's, Brogues, Crombies, Cravats the lot. The girls looking the bee's knees. Very smart. Bank Holidays was a great time there. Packed to the hilt. Awesome atmosphere, piss taking a plenty. The Skins would be out! Some were that smart they would pop home early evening to get changed for the night. Not in some of their nature's to wear the same clothing all day! Not like me. What I had on could last all weekend!! Despite the image that came with the Skin culture I'm glad to say the label that applied to this "fashion" (the right wing shit) didn't apply here. Happy all togetherness in Chippenham. Now some were a little protective of the pub and town, so if on a rare occasion some out of town young un's were to visit and try and cause a scene, well, I'm sure they would think twice about a return visit!! And don't anyone dare ruffle the Ben Sherman Shirt Collars. Loved that place. This tune is for the Skins of The Borough. The way they dressed and acted. Pretty much spot on. Good times. Staring At The Rude Boys. So apt. Enjoy.

**WSM Woods Raves**

This was a very new thing for us. Heard about these parties going on so a few of us took a wander up. Armed with the Thatchers by the gallon and fags we venture into the woods. Brilliant place those woods, used to walk the dog there. So havin' a laugh trying to find the party, not much happening! Then someone says "can you hear that"? A kinda rumble sound. We go in that direction. Soon the sounds getting louder and some flashing lights. This must be it. Never heard or seen anything like it. Now it wasn't hundreds of people dancing around these raves were new so probably about 50 people (I think)! So we sit down and enjoy the atmosphere and music. We are enjoying it our own way. Drinking our cider, couple of our lot have a boogie (not me for once). Listen to this manic dance music, most of which I kinda liked. I also liked the 'fuck you' attitude. Kinda punk rock really. Make your own music and fun. Most old Punks were bang into it as I later found out. Punk and Ska has always been my first music loves but I do enjoy a good bit of dance. And I know my music choice today is a few years after the raves started but fuck me what a tune. Prodigy are punk rock in my opinion.

**Day 71**

OK after The Jam yesterday, The Exploited. Bit of a contrast. But there is a story to this. Now back in time when Mods were in Chippenham like I said before, it was all cool with everyone. But I thought they did get some stick. But their dress

sense was for the most part smart. Fred Perry, Ben Sherman, Levi's, Tonic Suits etc. Looked sharp. Skins took some of the fashion and made it their own. Tidy. So, Park Lane very early 80s. My mate Mark lived here. My fishing buddy. I was a little Skinhead. In his bedroom was all sorts of nature stuff. Books on animals, fishing books, that sort of stuff. But to me more importantly a record player and vinyl. This is my territory. Oh and in the corner an air rifle. From his bedroom window is John Coles Park. Nice view. One time looking out of the window we spotted the Mods in the park by the swings. Well air rifle and records... The window was opened. First thing they would of heard would of been this song blaring out. Then very well aimed pellets hitting the swing bars (my mate was a good shot). I must stress at no point was it aimed at anyone, we were all mates!!! So *Fuck A Mod* blaring out and pings of pellets on the bars and the Mods trying to find out what and where the fuck it was coming from had me cracked up. I was about 12 or 13 my mate 16 or 17. Hilarious. No harm done. When I see him we sometimes reminisce about that day. Good job he was a good shot could of been a bit dodgy. I'm sure they would of done the same? All in jest of course. So morning all a little wake you up tune. Oi Oi!

**Greenway Area**

Sam Butler Terry Jones, Kev Woodward. They all lived together in a house I think they rented back in the 80s. Party House!! Only went to a couple cuz I moved away but they were pretty darn good. If you were around town at night and they were gonna have a party word spread like wild fire. Armed with booze off you'd go. When you arrived seemed like the whole of the Alternative Scene was there. Fantastic. Let the party begin. So laughs, music and a few rows and loads of booze was a good mix for shenanigans. I would say after the parties it would take more than a hoover and duster. A glazier on one occasion!! Yep one time the tele went through the window. As Sam reminded me, walking out of the door he's got a bag of sawdust and chucking it over all and sundry. I'm sure one time the door was hanging off? Lecky puking in the garden! All of us puking!!! Fucking ace. Happy days. So what better song... Enjoy

**Gonna Do Another Gig**

This surprise surprise goes back to mid/late 80s?? Weston Super Mare. While I was in Chippenham one weekend got chatting to Ian Liversidge. He was the singer. He was asking me where they could play in Weston that would be safe! Right ok. So I name drop a few. One in particular being The Prince of Wales. Opposite was Chaplin's, don't play there (Skins pub). So deal done. Don't, whatever you do play Chaplin's. A week or so later I'm walking into Weston from Worle. A car goes by beeping, it's Ian, he must be booking the gig. Right, nice one. Bump into Ian in Chippenham later and ask him where they are playing so I can tell the lads. His answer. Chaplin's. You what? I said don't play Chaplin's that's a Skinhead pub should of booked opposite Prince of Wales. Oh!! So it was booked. Fuck. The band: Sam Butler, Terry Jones, Ian Liversidge, and Iggy Parpity Parp). So down they come. They come with me to drum up support (we're going to need it)! Round a mates digs and convince them to come. Chaplin's!!!! Setting up. That was hard work. Terry tuning up in a plain rugby shirt, some skinhead goes, what teams that? Terry goes fuck knows. Skin: you fucking better do by the end of the night. Oh shit! This is



just tuning up. So band ready, mates arrive let the mayhem commence. Bosh, off we go. I go for a piss, Skins try and climb over the door to give me a kicking. Gap too small. I'm out. Back in the bar. We have our little corner the Skins are amassing now! Band blaring out. Terry being Terry is pulling faces at these Skins winding them right up. Ian dodging the beer, Sam and Iggy playing away. It's gonna go right off. Landlord to the rescue!! Basically he says fuck off now before word spreads and every skin in towns here. Right. Trying to pack gear away into cars surrounded by nutters was hard work. This was mid set. I reckon the guitars still had the leads in! We are out, gone. Scooters outside, Iggy wants to have a look, no way come on Iggy. Don't think anyone got hit that night. That story amongst a few is one that is retold as The Band That Got Away. Remember Liver's, Prince of Wales not Chaplin's. I think that was the one and only time they played Weston.

#### Another Good Chat With Tony Falcone

Back when I was about 11 or 12 we used to go to Woodlands Rd babysitting. We think with Estelle Carter, Tony's girlfriend at the time. So we'd sit round there watching TV and taking our babysitting duties very seriously. So much so that one day Tony wanted to Tattoo me!! Being a little Rude Boy at the time and getting in a bit of bother with the Police 'we' opted for four dots. ACAB or All Coppers Are Bastards. "Do It" I say. Out comes a little pot of Indian ink and a needle. Fresh from his dirty pocket!!! Hot water from the kettle on it to sterilise it. Off he goes. What a good idea I'm thinking. Jab jab jab with the needle, pain and blood. As he's doing the first dot I'm thinking my dad's a bit fiery and would take great pleasure in dishing me out another bashing, so I actually panicked and told him to stop. Now he's on a roll and wants to finish the job. But he granted my appeal cuz I was shitting it. I remember getting in the bath later and trying to wash it off!!!! Twat. I still have the 'Dot'. Ain't getting that covered over. Not a chance. Pride of place on my forearm. I'll show ya when I see you. It's a beauty. Tony, another one of my oldest mates. Love that bloke. So Tony, for your failed effort as a Tattoo Artist I give you The Stranglers and Skin Deep. Oh yeah, my old man never saw the 'Dot' so I wish I had the other three done now. Fancy it Tony???

After yesterday's song I had a like from an old friend. Anthony Hines. I've known this guy since 1980. His brother Phil Hines was in my class at school so met him through Phil. Foxham boys. Didn't know the older brother. Now many years ago ended up at a party in Woodlands Rd. The end by Canterbury St. God knows whose house it was. I was probably not even a teenager!! So how I ended up there I don't know. So in this house and Anthony and his mate Matty Moore are there. I reckon Anthony was the first sort of Punky person I'd met at the time. Music playing, tomfoolery in abundance. I reckon I must of had a little drink or two as well (naughty boy). So the vivid image in my head is of Anthony and Matty pogoing in this little front room. I'm watching them laughing as they are pissing about. It was funny. Anyhow they are trying to out pogo each other getting higher and higher legs flaying all over the shot. Then darkness and feet crunching on broken glass!! Silence for a millisecond then laughter. In the pogo challenge Anthony had jumped so high that he'd hit and smashed the light bulb out with his head!!! I think Anthony won the comp.

So having at long last managed to get in touch with some of my old WSM mates. Well chuffed. Gonna be a good reunion. Ripcord. I've mentioned them in my stories before. Proper thrash band. Had some great times watching these. Birmingham gig being one of my faves. Napalm Death in the early days with them. May of been Conflict too?? So this is my favourite from them. Last time I saw them was at The Longacre in Bath. With Concrete Sox maybe Amebix?? Top night. And to top it off got tickets for the reunion gig. 29ish years on. They sold out in 4 minutes!!! Fond times us lot sat in the Gardens lashing it up. WSM was, apart from the roughness, alright. We came back to Weston from one of Ripcord's gigs crammed in the back of a van and Mike one of our mates fell asleep and shat himself!! That was a long journey. So for the WSM Punks RIPCORD. Have to say this is 50 odd seconds of pure thrash. So be prepared. Oh and on YouTube there's a video of one gig in Weston about 1986 you can see me jumping about.

This story been going around my head since seeing the fella in question. Jamie Wicks. Now back at Tugela Road, my housekeeper years. One time me and Fester (Julian Wilson) went on the lash. Shocker!! I skiddled home earlier. smashed. Into bed. Some time later awoken by Fester, more smashed telling me I had to get up for work. Work!! Eh? I've got a job. Housekeeper. No, proper work. Motorway barrier work. Ahhh shite. 6am!!!! So up I reluctantly get. Get picked up in a little Van. 2 seats in the front. One for Jamie the driver. One for Martin Mitch the passenger. Where the fuck do I sit? Oh I see. Empty tar bucket behind the gear stick. Would of been alright have it not been for the fact that we were going to Birmingham!!! Ass more numb than a dentists injection when we get there. Out we get on the side of this freezing cold motorway. It's bastard snowing too. Get given a shovel and told to dig holes. Dig?? My hands do dishes. Freezing my tits off. And I mean freezing. I wasn't prepared. Gets hit in the head by a shovel. Sorry, Jamie says. Oh God!!! Break time. Café. Hot food and tea. And a warm up. So I'm reading a paper. It's across my lap. Next thing a knife goes through it just missing my leg!! Through a advert advertising for police recruits. What the fuck!! I hate coppers, I heard. It was Troy. Nuff said. Left the café and my nightmare continues (good song). Love all those motorway boys back in the day. But I didn't last long. Luckily Fester's ironing wasn't getting done and the house was getting messy. Saved. This song was released around the time. Pretty apt really. So for Jamie, Martin, Troy and all the rest I think you were truly Born To Be Wild.

#### Funny One Today

Now back in the 80s I lived at Tugela Road with Fester. Now his house was brilliant. Loads of fun and mates. I wasn't working so became a kind of house sitter. Making sure the house was clean and tidy and that. Sometimes if he had a meeting to go to I would have been left a note saying what clothes he wanted ironed for the day. In return for my duties he would get the grub in. So one particular day me and Fester toddled off to Sainsburys. The old one that used to be in town. So usual routine, buy food take it home and then go on the piss. Simple. Worked a treat. Until... one time we are going up and down the aisles, Fester doing his normal shelving sweeping, chucking it all in when I start to complain (cheeky git). I don't eat meat I don't like that etc. Well as some of us know Julian's fuse is somewhat short at



times. This day it was super short. He went red in the face (I could see it coming). Trolley full of food. I take a step back then... whoooooosh a whole trolley of food sent down the packed aisle at 100 mph. And he's gone. I'm stood there thinking shite. Who's gonna pay for these crisps I've been eating on the way round. We all did that, right??? Now I'm a bit stunned and apologetic to people about 'Trolley Rage'. Then I'm thinking where's he gone. Only one place really. Wine Bar. Over the Mound across the Bridge I'm in. And sure enough there he is. Just looks at me like nothings happened and we are on the piss. We did have a laugh about it. As we did Friday when we were reminiscing. God there's so many stories from that house. Oh and Fester, Charlie Harper is 72.

#### Just Going Through Stuff. As You Do.

SLF. I remind myself of the first time I saw them. It was 1987, GO FOR IT AGAIN TOUR. Bristol. Mate of mine said come along. Sound. Being 18 went with the flow. Got a lift from his mate to Bristol. Ta very much. See you later for a lift home. Sorted. Pub, ciders, in the gig. Great night. They were fucking great. Can't remember the support band. But this gig really made its mark. Seen them loads since. In Bristol again some months back. Still good. So gig over. Pubs didn't stay open late back then. So managed to squeeze in a couple more drinks while waiting for our lift. And waiting, and waiting. Good hour passes. Fuck he ain't coming. No mobiles then either. No buses running. My mates idea, let's hitch it. Ahh fuck. Glad I bought an SLF hoody. It's bastard freezing. So off we stagger!!! Walking for what seemed like an age before getting a lift. Some random bloke pick us up and drop us in Chippenham on his way to Swindon. Fair play. Looking back on it now, if I would of got on with my family at the time we would of been sorted. I come from there and they all live there. Still my fuck you all frame of mind was stronger then. I did that a lot!!!! Still hey ho. Topped the night off.

#### July 1985. Subhumans played at The Fog Club.

What a night. They refused to play at first (it was a bit rough) but when the Chippenham Skinheads threatened to kick their heads in if they didn't, they did the right thing and played a blinding set. We had punks from Sweden turn up (the skinheads beat them up)!! And we also had the riot police out as well, dogs, shields the lot. As bad as it sounds it was a brilliant night. Funnily enough the Subhumans never played Chippenham again. Chippenham Skins blocking the doors or sat on them with some of us chanting A.C.A.B. Ace.

# ANARCHIST PICNIC



## 1936-1986

19th JULY BROCKWELL PARK BRIXTON

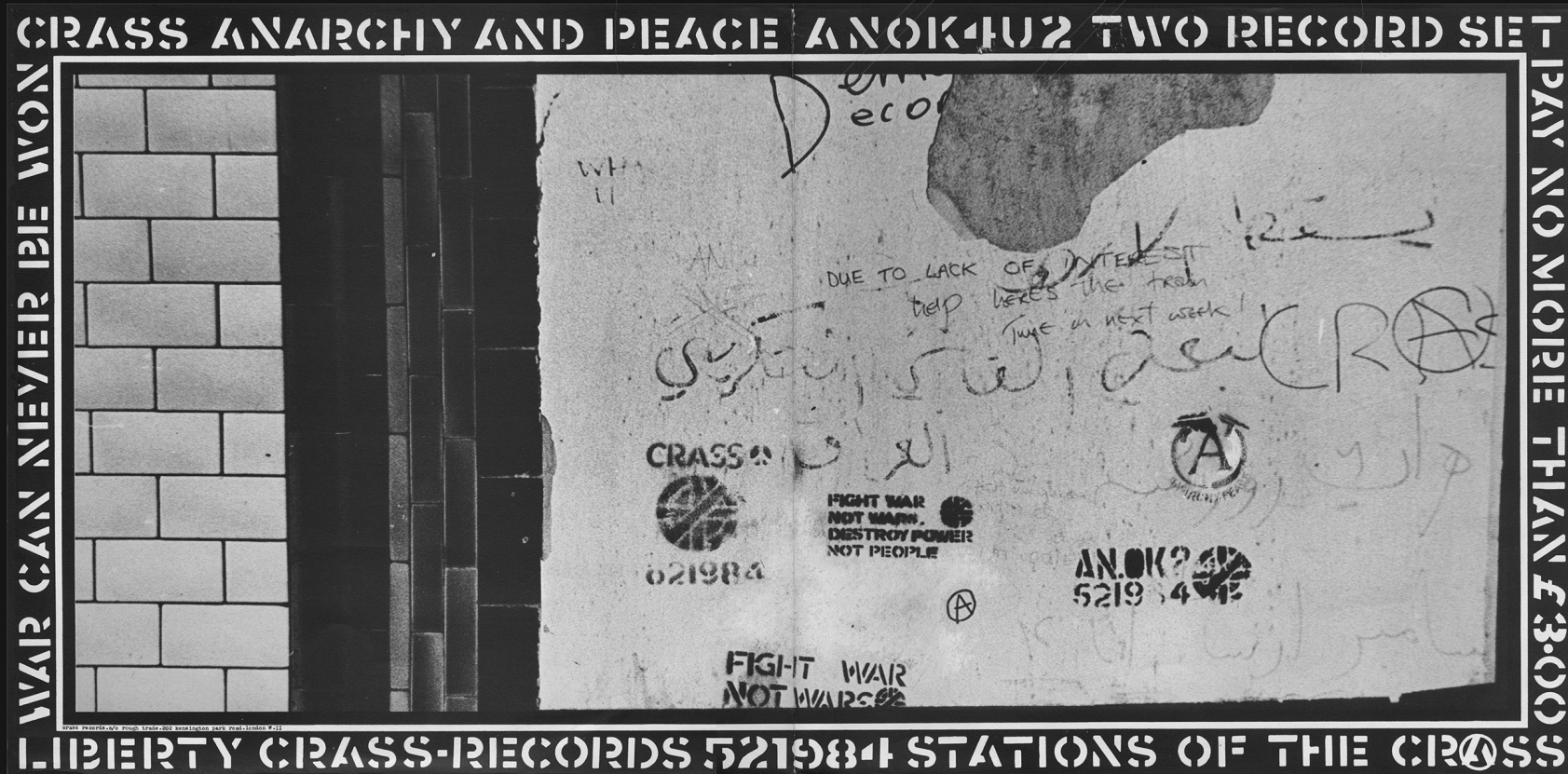
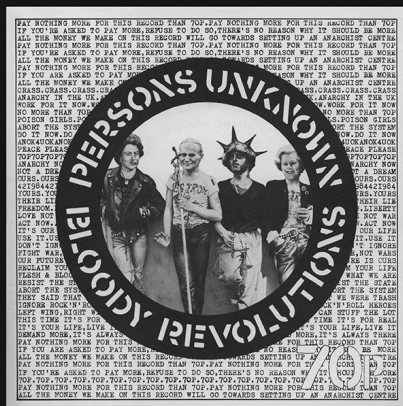
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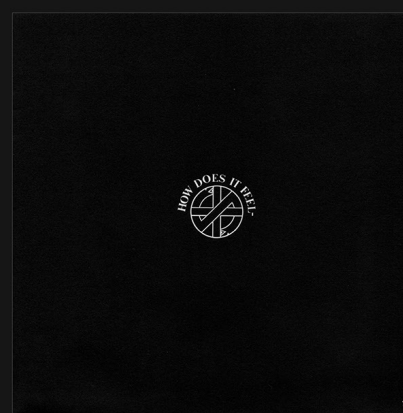
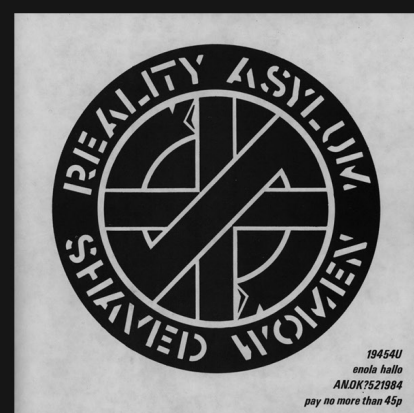
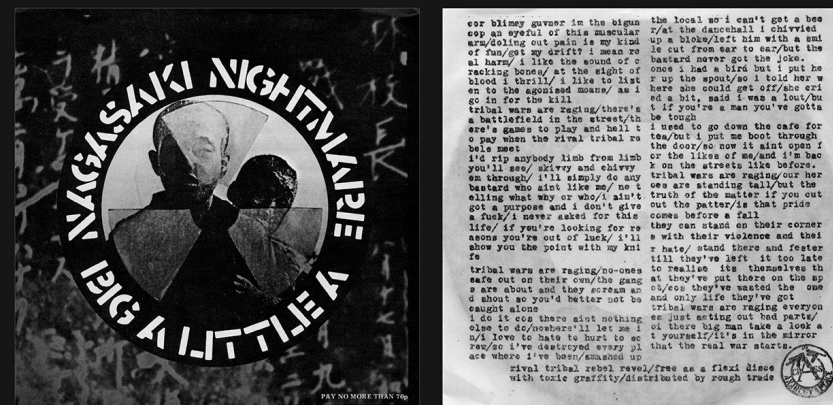
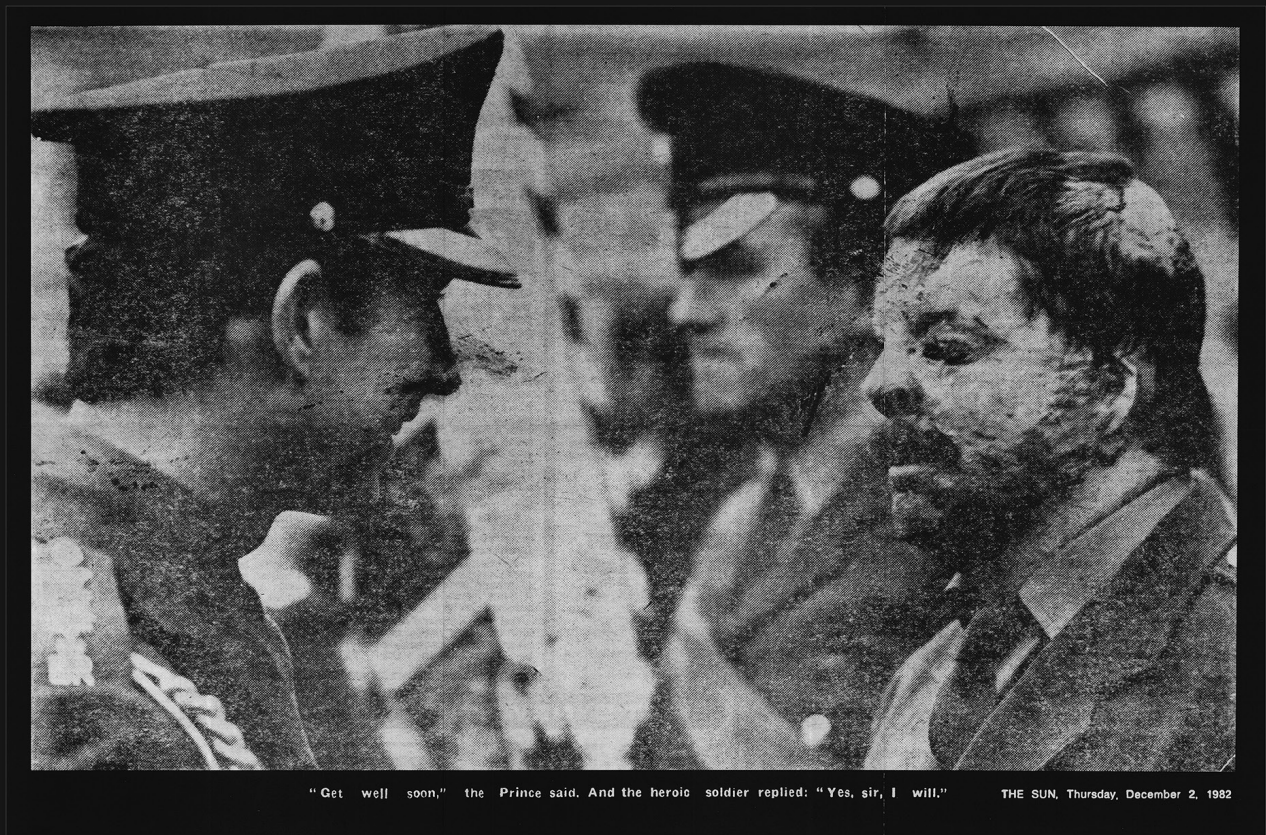
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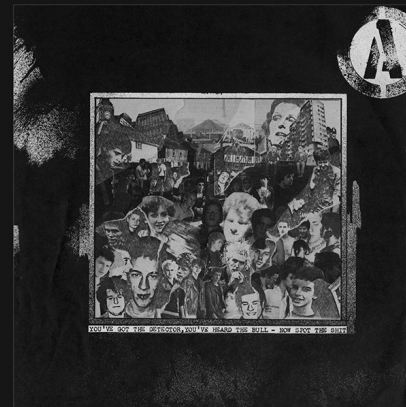
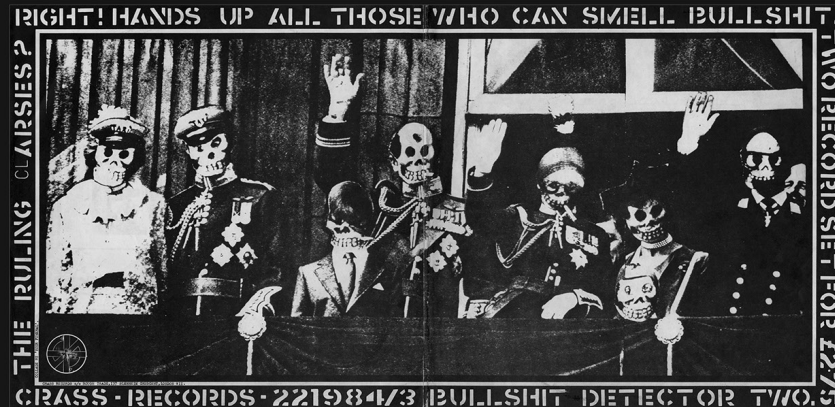
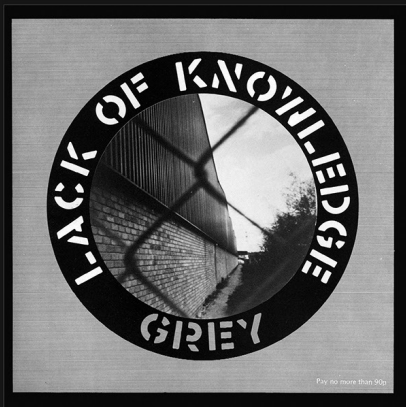
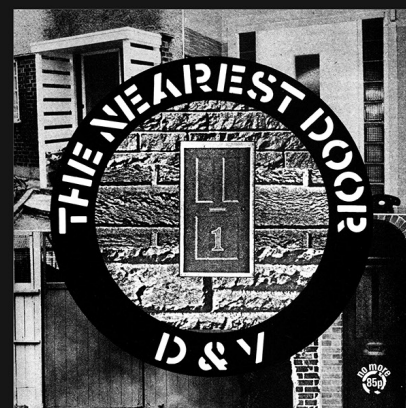
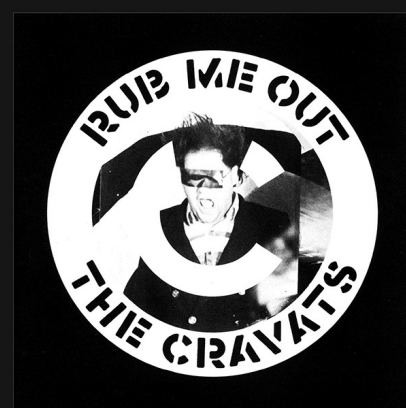
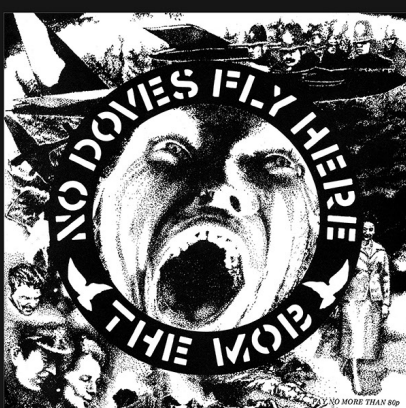
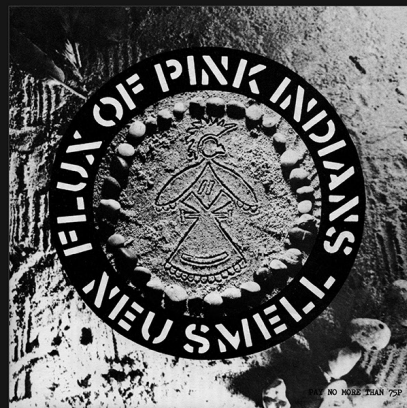
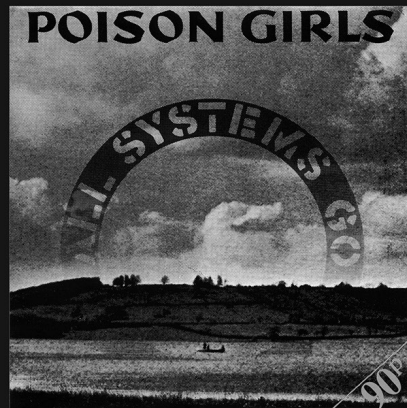
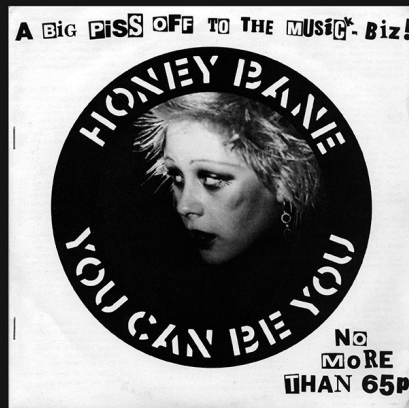
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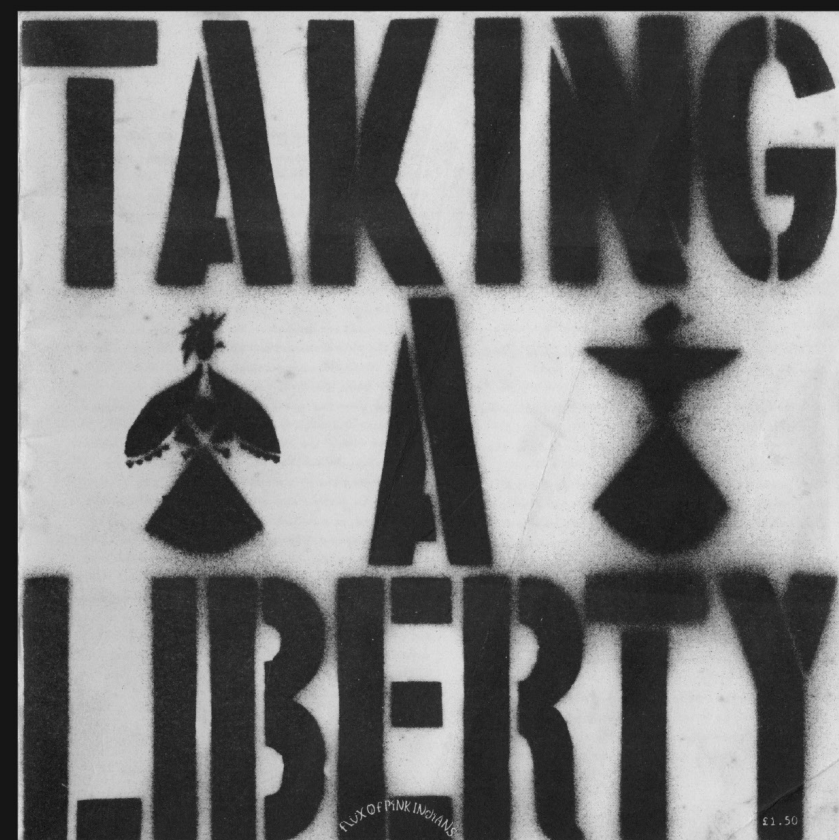
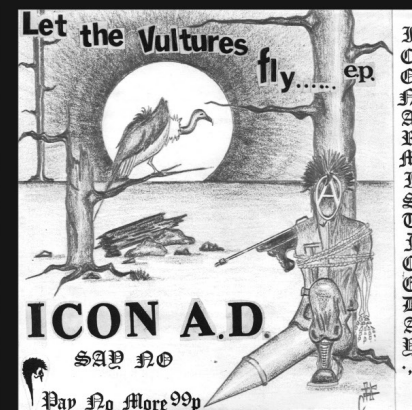
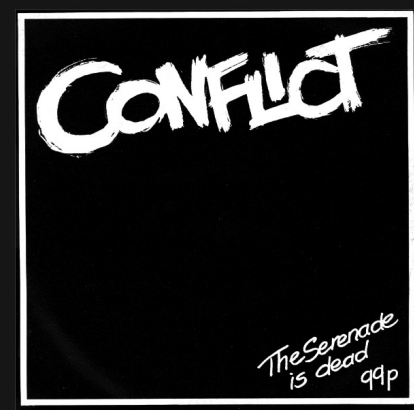
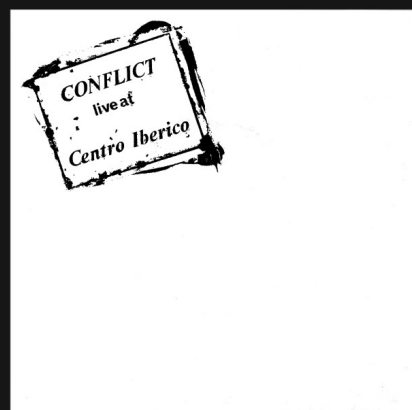
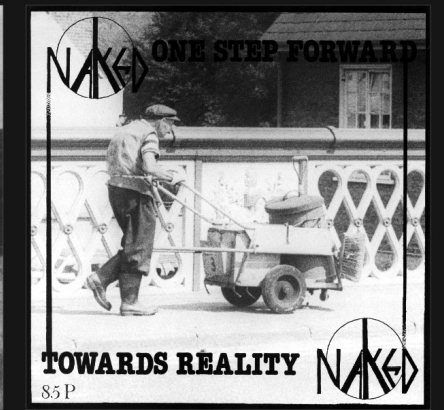
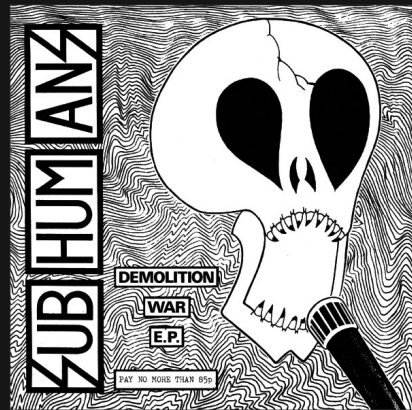
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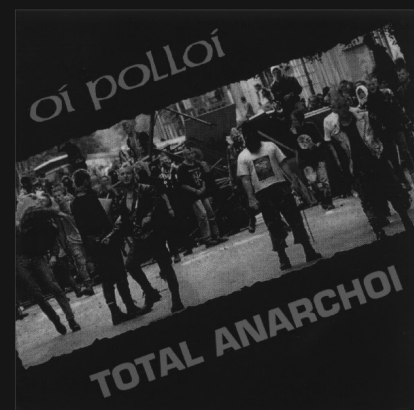
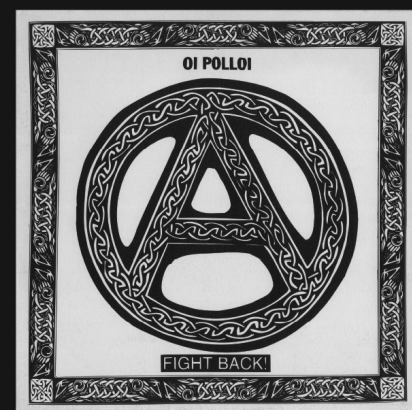
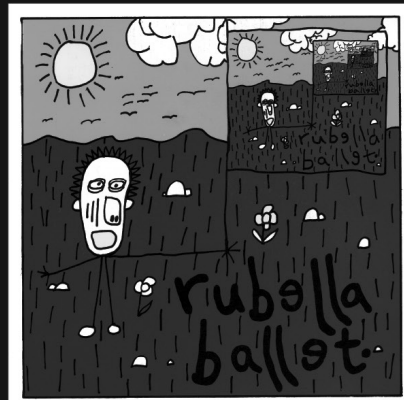
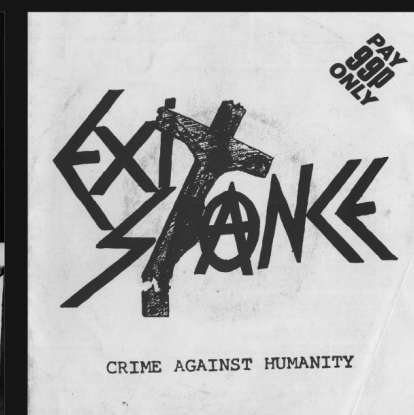
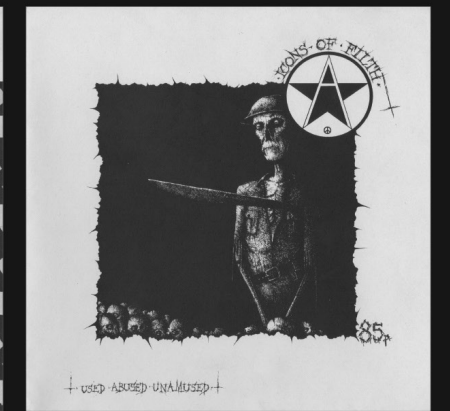
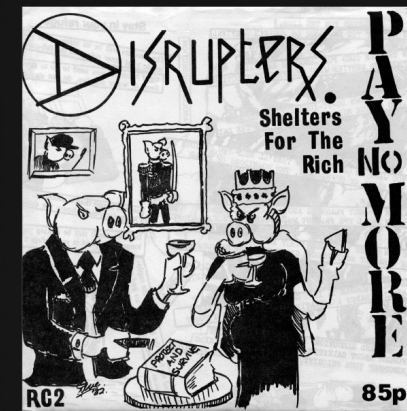
CRASS RECORDS - YOU CAN BE YOU





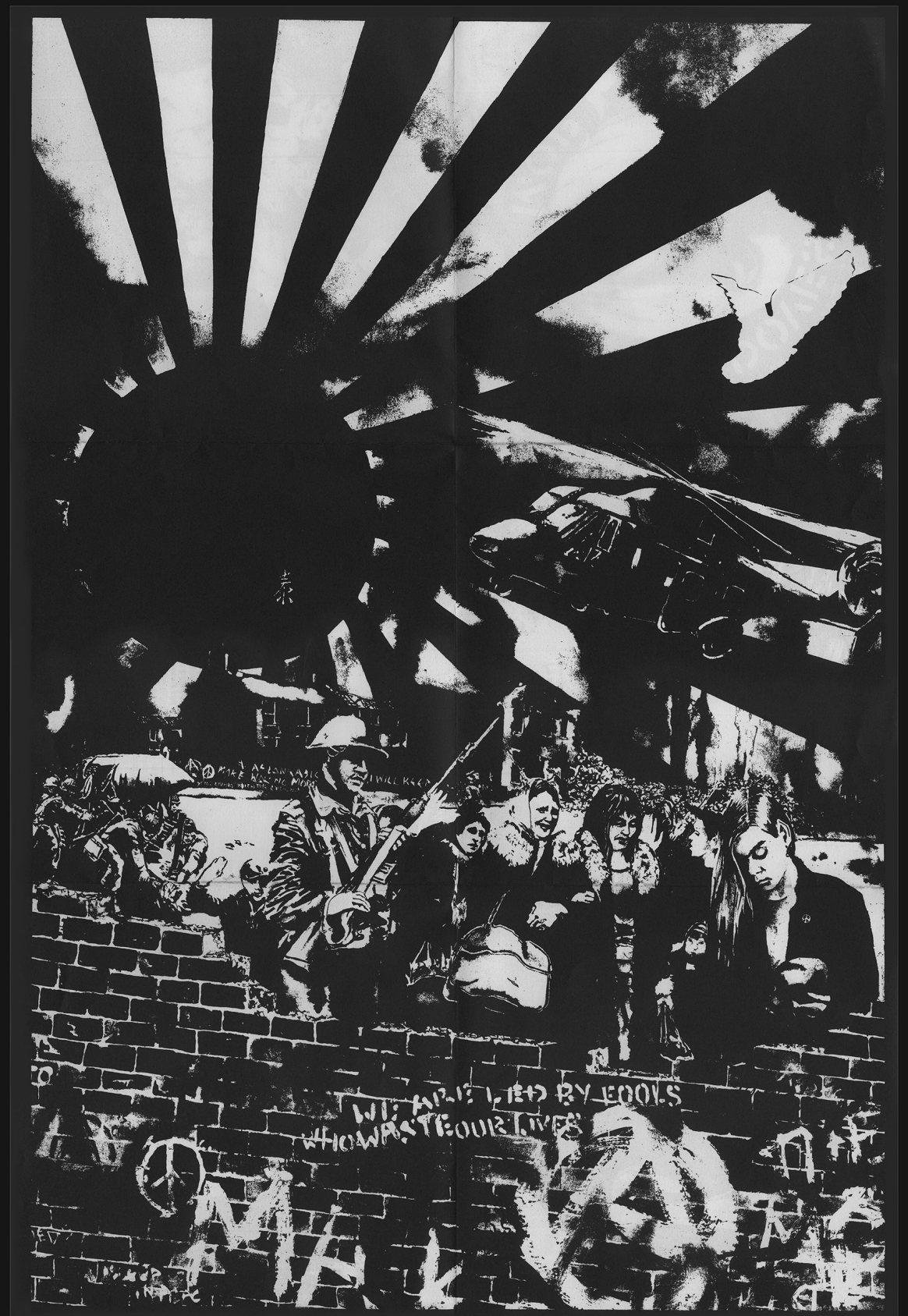
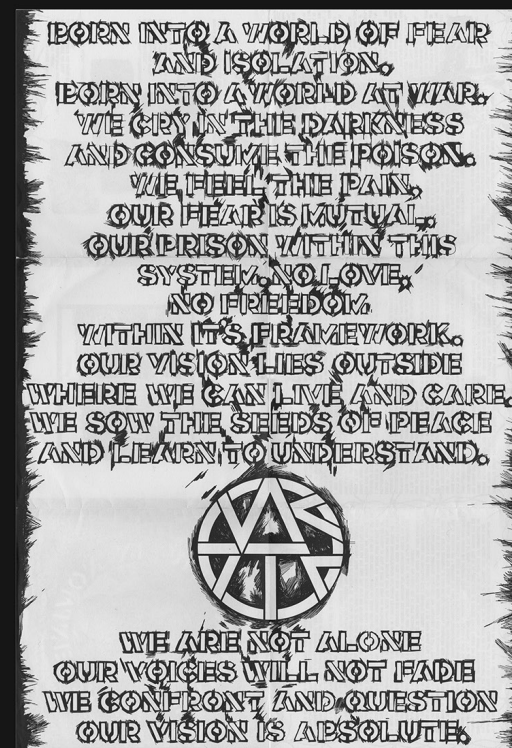
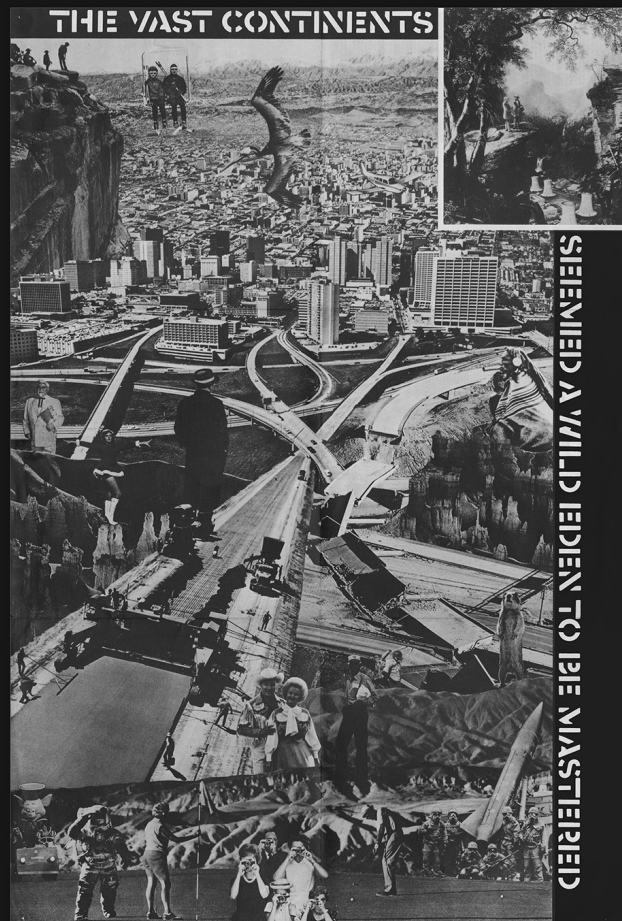
LET THE TRIBE INCREASE





BE EXACTLY WHO YOU WANT TO BE, DO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO

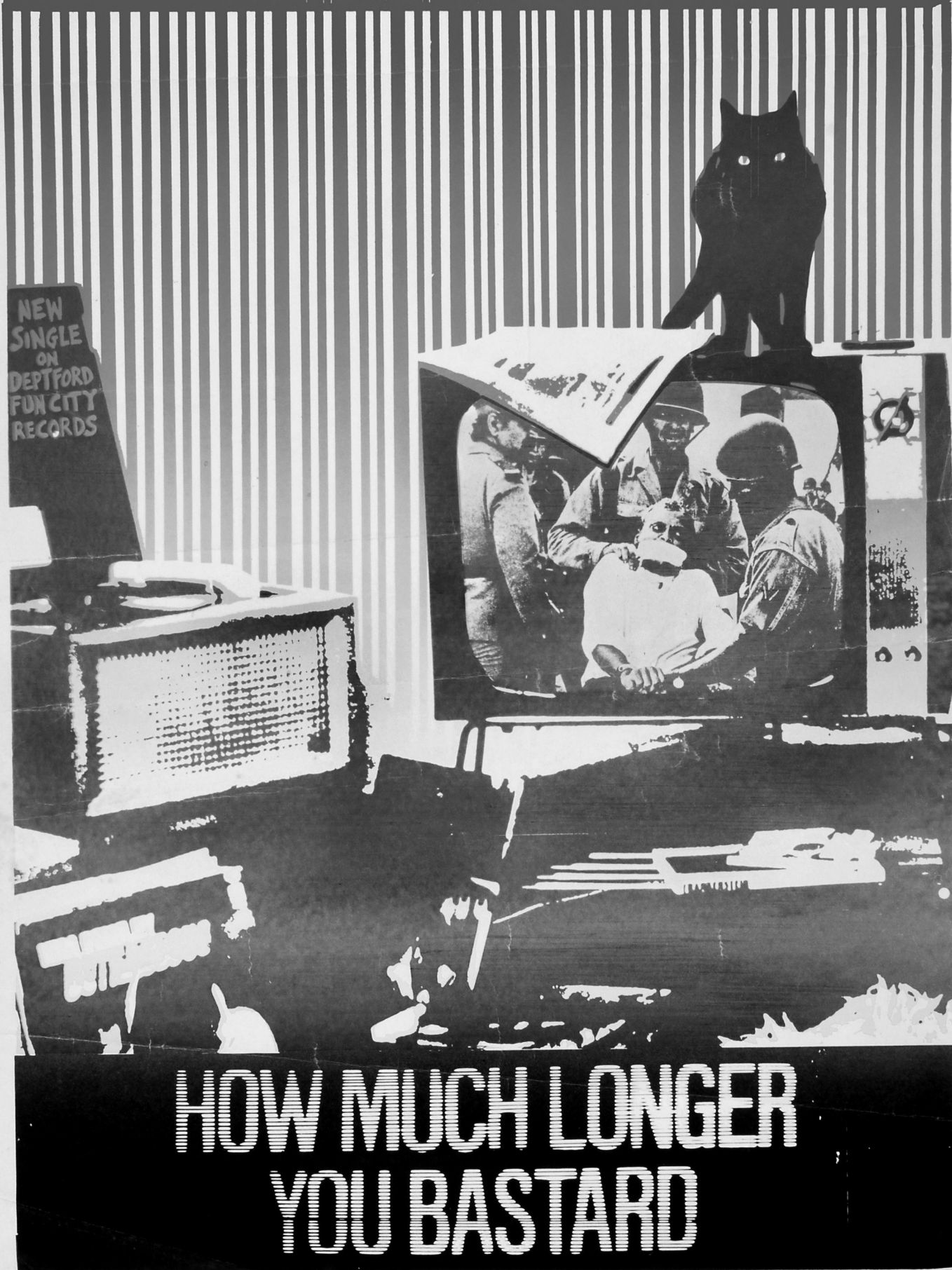




WE ARE NOT ALONE, OUR VOICES WILL NOT FADE



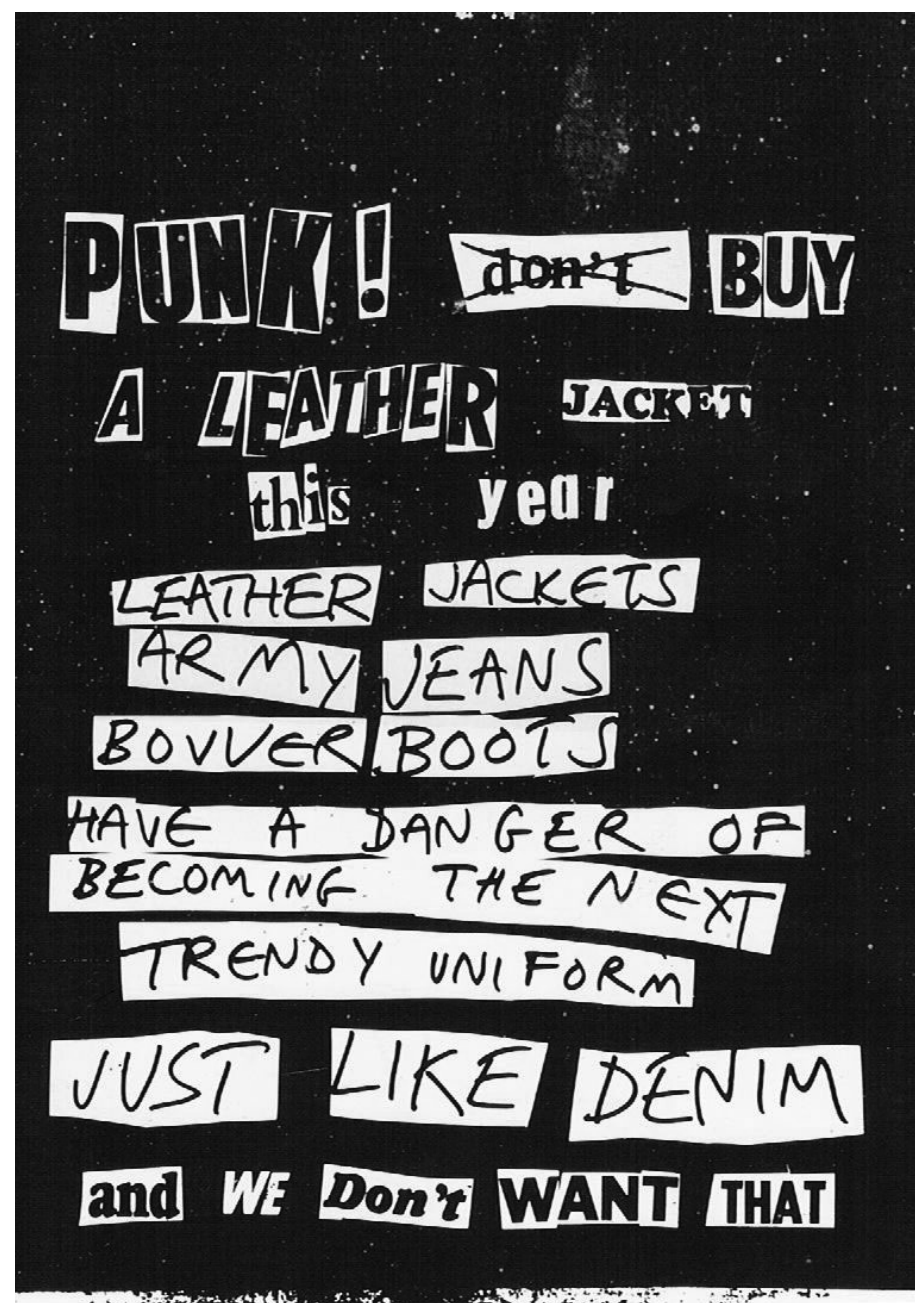
# ALTERNATIVE TV



How Much Longer? Punk Styles, Punk Aesthetics, Punk Conventions

HOW MUCH LONGER? PUNK STYLES,  
PUNK AESTHETICS, PUNK CONVENTIONS

Russ Bestley



A few critical thoughts, reflections, comments – and a little bit of provocation – on the subject of punk graphic styles: their evolution, recuperation and standardisation.

*How much longer will people wear  
Nazi armbands and dye their hair?  
Safety pins and spray their clothes  
Talk about anarchy, Fascism and boredom?  
ATV – How Much Longer? (Deptford Fun City 1977)*



Punk's original premise embraced a number of ideological positions: the notion that 'expertise' is unnecessary (*anyone can do it*), a call-to-arms for direct action and independence (*do-it-yourself*) and the questioning of authority. These were married to a focus on individuality, creativity and personal expression that set itself in opposition to the 'norm'. Punk's initial success witnessed an explosion of new sounds and styles, from music to fashion, art, graphic design, film, writing and publishing. 'Punk', or 'new wave', was simply an umbrella term that could be applied to an eclectic and disparate range of material or activity. This was abundantly obvious to anyone with ears to listen (try comparing the music of the Sex Pistols with the Ramones, Stranglers, X Ray Spex, Wire, Siouxsie & the Banshees, XTC, Buzzcocks, Blondie and Talking Heads, for instance), but was equally clear in relation to punk's visual and graphic languages. In parallel to the broad diversity in musical styles, a quick look at the graphics that accompanied these groups tells a similarly wide-ranging story. Jamie Reid and Helen Wellington-Lloyd's work for the Sex Pistols was radically different to Arturo Vega's tongue-in-cheek Ramones identity, Paul Henry's complex album cover concepts for the Stranglers, David Dragon's wonderfully obtuse minimalist artwork for Wire's *Pink Flag*, or Malcolm Garrett's sophisticated, ideas-based graphics for Buzzcocks, Magazine and the Members.

#### **Punk Individualism, Provocation and Graphic Agitation**

Reid's powerful 'punk' imagery was largely distinctive for a number of reasons – in part because his visual skill and dexterity was incredibly hard to match, and in part because his graphic style and approach was so strongly connected with one genre-defining group, the Sex Pistols, that any attempt to replicate it appeared immediately inauthentic and corrupt. Of course, others were also keen to mark their own points of difference, their own uniqueness and individuality, to set them apart from the wider punk crowd. Such attitudes reflected punk's autonomous spirit of rebellion – the irony being that 'punk' was a movement of self-styled individuals who widely rejected the idea of a coherent, collective group identity. This was reflected as much in interviews and public statements by key figures within the emerging subculture (e.g. the rejection of 'punk' as a term, the struggle with other umbrella suggestions including new wave, regular expressions of personal or group distinction from all the 'rest') as it was in lyrics and visual communication. For example, note the stereotype of 1977-era punk songs communicated in the first person as a statement of individual autonomy: expressions of subjective angst and self-identity seemed to be commonplace in the wake of the Sex Pistols' *Anarchy In The UK* (with its opening salvo "*I am an anti-Christ, I am an anarchist*" setting the tone for what was to follow) and *I Wanna Be Me*. UK examples include the Drones *I Just Wanna Be Myself*; Sham 69 *I Don't Wanna*; the Boys *I Don't Care*; Suburban Studs *I Hate School*; the Lurkers *I'm On Heat* or *I Don't Need To Tell Her*; 999 *I'm Alive*; UK Subs *I Live In A Car*; and Buzzcocks *I Don't Mind* or *What Do I Get?*.

Malcolm Garrett attempted to reflect the ironic obtuseness of Buzzcocks' music and lyrics in his approach to their record sleeves and posters, as he noted in *The Art of Punk*: "*I felt that this approach reflected the group's lyrics, which were on the one hand quite "domestic," but also bittersweet, slightly dehumanized (there is no "he" or "she" in a Buzzcocks lyric), and somewhat aggressive all at the same time.*" Strategies

for Buzzcocks included playfully highlighting the production process itself, labeling special carrier bags for the debut album with the word Product, or massively enlarging the United Artists logo and catalogue number on the sleeve of the single *I Don't Mind/Autonomy* so that it dominated the band name and song titles. Both songs were taken from the debut album (contradicting punk's widespread value-for-money ideology), a strategy that Buzzcocks and the designer disagreed with: Garrett's deliberately obtuse promotional poster ignored the song titles and simply stated "*this single out now, new single out soon*".

In some ways, early punk's diversity was its core strength. Creative responses to punk's call-to-arms were often witty and engaging, sometimes radical and challenging, innovative and experimental, sometimes simplistic, superficial or downright inane. There was no inherent punk 'style', at least beyond the restrictions imposed by amateur production and a lack of skills or technique – early punk fanzines, for instance, shared aesthetic similarities that were largely a product of the process of design and print manufacture, rather than a set of coordinated intentions. Mark Perry said he set out to create a 'proper magazine' with *Sniffin' Glue*, but lacked the skills to create a professional product. The result was something of a happy accident – a graphic style that embodies the urgency, energy and attitude of the new punk DIY generation. Other punk fanzine producers followed suit, though again the visual aesthetic and graphic style reflected as much the tools and techniques employed as it did a desire to emulate successful punk fanzines already in existence. In fact, the opposite is closer to the truth – punk fanzine producers wanted their own work to stand out from the crowd, to retain a sense of individuality and autonomy, in the same way that many bands were looking for their own unique stylistic or rhetorical point of difference.

As punk evolved, so its visual language developed in tandem. The rawness of early punk was softened by the impact of commercial interests as time went on, though like so many other aspects of punk history, this is a complicated story. On the one hand, investment by major labels might be seen as exploitative – the implementation of a business model to what might be seen as 'authentic' youth subculture founded on autonomy and resistance. But, equally, it reflected the *success* of that subculture to impact on the lives and interests of a huge range of people across the UK, Europe, the US and beyond, and the need for greater investment in manufacturing and distribution to meet demand. Geographical distinctions also need to be made here: the marketing of New Wave (and more distinctly, Power Pop) in the US differed from the situation in the UK, in part since the much closer proximity of towns and cities in the UK allowed for a greater sense of community and subcultural cohesion (and the development of a punk 'underground') than the vast land expanse of the US. Equally, the way that the established music industry operates in different countries played a part in dissemination, and acceptance (or otherwise) of the emerging subculture: US Hardcore was in many ways a closer parallel to the early UK punk scene than its 'New Wave' precursors in New York, Detroit and the West Coast, which were largely seen as a continuation of existing avant-garde rock music styles and genres, facilitated and marketed by industry professionals. Certainly, the notion of autonomy and artistic control played a major part in defining a punk 'subculture' in relation to the traditional music industry, though the subsequent



commercial success of the ‘independents’ was to lead to a great deal of ideological wrangling. Perhaps the natural conclusion of this dichotomy was the (short-lived) success of Rough Trade and the Cartel network – the marriage of independent ideals to established markets and industry models.

Obviously, there are also contradictions – while many of the successful first wave of punk and new wave groups in the UK were taken on by the established music industry, plenty of others were inspired by the *do-it-yourself* narrative to take up arms and create their own version of the subculture. Some of this was ideological – a reaction to recuperation by corporate interests and a return to, or continuation of, punk’s supposedly autonomous, underground roots – while some was driven more by necessity than ideology. After all, the industry exploitation of punk and new wave was moving fast, and no one expected it to last too long, not least many of the major labels who signed short-term contracts with their new protégés and went for the fast buck rather than any sort of extended investment. By 1978, the A&R men were looking beyond punk and searching for the next big thing – the Mod revival, Ska and Two-Tone, the New Wave of British Heavy Metal, or the electronic music boom and New Romanticism that was just about visible on the horizon. Simply put, the next generation of punk bands simply weren’t being signed up by the majors in the same way that the first wave had elicited such a frenzy of activity, in part because the labels had already placed their bets, and in part because they didn’t see much of a long-term return on what was expected to be a short-term trend.

*Everybody’s saying that punk is dead, it’s time to close the shop  
I’m sorry but we mean it man – we’re never ever gonna stop  
And we don’t care what the papers say, we’re gonna pogo ‘til we drop  
Even though you’re tryin’ to tell me everybody’s into Power Pop  
Alberto Y Lost Trios Paranoias – Fuck You (Logo Records 1978)*

The picture regarding punk autonomy and independence is, then, pretty mixed. Some pioneering spirits (bands, labels, artists, designers) set out to pursue an ideological path in opposition to major commercial vested interests: Stiff, Rough Trade, Factory, Small Wonder, Beggars Banquet, the Desperate Bicycles, Crass, Scritti Politti. Others seized an opportunity offered by the contemporary zeitgeist – after all, the punk and post-punk independent scene was booming by 1978, and many groups and small labels found that they could self-finance a limited run of records in likely anticipation of covering their costs. Independent distribution networks offered a further prop to this cottage industry, alongside the proliferation of mail order outlets and other businesses set up to facilitate the DIY punk boom.

#### **The Rules Are... There Are No Rules**

By the late 1970s, UK punk had officially morphed into a range of sub-genres, all competing for attention. To a large extent, this was driven by commercial interests as much as by the groups or artists themselves. The early punk umbrella had contained a wide variety of styles and approaches anyway – they just hadn’t been individually named or marketed as such. As the incandescent flash of the initial punk explosion was becoming tarnished in the media, participants were moving on to seek out new styles, and a new generation of punks was coming in to take up the reins. Some of the

shifts were aesthetic and stylistic, some were commercially-driven, while others were ideological or political – punk morphed into Post-Punk, New Wave, Real Punk, Oi!, Anarcho Punk and Goth, and continued to fragment and shatter as time went on. In some ways, this was a boom time for punk art and design – the need to demarcate a sense of difference was even more marked, though the unfortunate counterpoint was that a stronger sense of tribalism and sub-genre affinity began to cement visual codes and stylistic conventions in graphics, dress codes and fashion.

*Here we all are in the latest craze  
Stick with the crowd  
Hope it’s not a passing phase  
The Adverts – Safety in Numbers (Anchor Records 1977)*

Anarcho punk was one example of a punk sub-genre that established new aesthetic and visual standards, emerging partly as a reaction to the political polarisation of the UK punk movement, with a direct connection to the underground counter-culture of the 1960s and early 1970s. Often employing explicit visual and verbal attacks on the power of the state, together with strong anti-war and /or animal rights sentiments alongside an austere, monochrome, deliberately lo-tech and raw design approach, records tended to follow certain unspoken aesthetic rules. Many of these conventions were directly influenced by the output of the band and collective Crass, whose media interruptions – incorporating records, books, films, events, concerts, printed publications and posters – employed a distinctive visual style and paved the way for an entire sub-genre. A viral campaign based on word-of-mouth communications within underground punk networks saw the band’s name and graphic identity stencilled on walls across the country and widespread recognition in fanzines and punk media channels. Utilising a strategy of (low) maximum price details on the sleeves, visual devices centred on a heavy black circle, the anarchist symbol, and fold-out posters, the group’s graphic output was designed to communicate strong political messages along with a sense of authority, directness and a lack of what the group saw as superfluous decorative or stylistic gestures.

*Yes that’s right, punk is dead  
It’s just another cheap product for the consumer’s head  
Bubblegum rock on plastic transistors  
Schoolboy sedition backed by big time promoters  
Crass – Punk is Dead (Crass Records 1978)*

Crass’s visual work was self-produced, with art direction credits going to Crass and G Sus (Gee Vaucher). Drummer Penny Rimbaud had experience as a graphic designer, while Vaucher was an accomplished commercial illustrator, most recently for the *New York Times* magazine and *Rolling Stone*. The group’s circular visual identity was originally designed for the frontispiece of a self-published book by Rimbaud entitled *Christ’s Reality Asylum*, some time before the formation of the group. Designed by Dave King, the symbol “...represented the various forms of oppression that I’d discussed in the book: family, church and state. Heraldic in quality, part national flag, part cross, part swastika, the circular design broke on its edges into two serpents’ heads, suggesting that the power it represented was about to consume itself” according to Rimbaud. The symbol



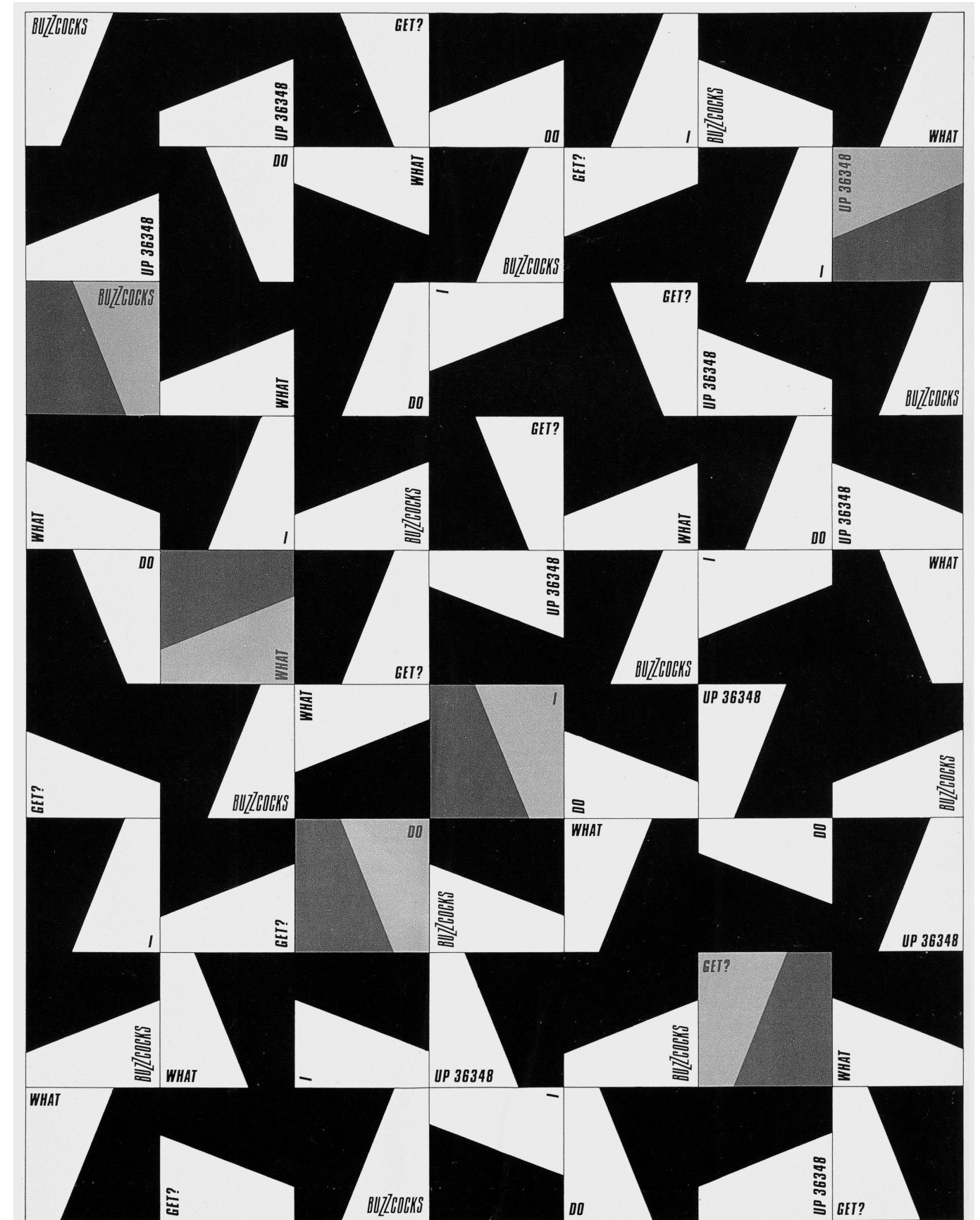
also featured on the cover of the first Crass single, *Reality Asylum/Shaved Women*: the cover of the first pressing was silkscreen printed by the group themselves onto folded card with two-colour inlays, with subsequent pressings professionally litho-printed in black on a white newsprint background, in what was to widely become a graphic convention for the anarcho punk movement as a whole. Anarcho punk evolved as both a literal interpretation of the anarchist message of first wave punk, and as a protest against what the punk movement had become. Later developments saw a further reflection and critique of the way that anarcho punk, in itself, had become stylised and had established invisible rules and codes of conduct among its followers: some groups such as Hagar the Womb and Rubella Ballet deliberately introduced colour into the visual mix as a reaction against the graphic conventions of their forebears.

### Nostalgia and Conformity

In some ways, the story of anarcho punk's evolution reflects the experience of most of the other punk sub-genres operating in parallel: an initial ideological or aesthetic premise, initiated by a group or small collective of participants on the fringes of the established punk subculture, sets a new visual, musical or ideological standard that helps to shape and influence others. A new punk sub-genre evolves, with participants helping to shape musical, stylistic and graphic conventions. Over time, these conventions become diluted through repetition and re-use, or are weakened by poorly executed and generic copycat material, and the sub-genre becomes stylised and in some ways a self-parody of its initial, radical premise.

*I guess it's just the music that brings on nostalgia for an age yet to come*  
Buzzcocks – *Nostalgia* (United Artists 1978)

I'm not sure I have any kind of 'answer' to the issues raised in this short reflective essay. Maybe it's just our shared experience of cultural life – the birth, progression and ultimate decline of subcultural groups and communities within a market economy. 'Punk' does continue to morph and change, though perhaps some current trends indicate a growing degree of what I might call nostalgic conservatism – punk as museum piece or cultural heritage. I have always taken issue with Dick Hebdige's theories of subcultures as initially driven by pioneers but then diluted and ultimately recuperated as commercial fashion styles, since I believe that subcultural evolution is ongoing, particularly as it impacts on people and places further afield, away from the 'cultural centres'. However, I also have to accept that a creeping uniformity can, and often does, take hold over what were originally radical and challenging ideas, styles and aesthetics. There are still some pioneering radicals out there within the wider 'punk' scene, but perhaps their impact is being obscured by the weight of convention across the majority of the subculture – tired clichés and boring modern traditions in music, lyrics, clothes, haircuts and graphics, alongside a disaffected thousand-yard stare, honed to perfection over the past forty years but, sadly, lacking any sense of ingenuity, menace or malice.







## INCREASINGLY RIGHT WING

Ted Curtis



He'd come down from Ampleforth College, a private sixth form brainery on the Yorkshire moors (Pax, ora et labora), to pursue a Cultural Studies degree at the Polytechnic of East London, just before it became a university. You can go look up when all the universities became polytechnics if you really want to know the date, but it was the time of Stephen Lawrence, of Blood and Honour and Combat 18. He had a cockney accent but was from a very middle class background, his father an eminent physician, former dentist, and the chief medical officer for North Devon, and he made a fascinating double act with Andy Martin, our host, who had switched from working-class Battersea to exaggerated BBC RP, in order to speak in an erudite manner to strangers about classical music. This was at Brougham Road, the famous – in anarcho-punk folklore, at any rate – street of squats in Hackney dating back to the squatting boom of the 1970s. It had become a housing co-op in the 1980s, then in Hackney Council parlance a SLUG (Short Life User Group). I had rocked up there uninvited, alongside Emily Drake the folk singer, following a long on/off correspondence with Andy and sometimes with Dave Fanning, the other half of The Apostles, the most confrontational, contrarian and sporadically brilliant band



to emerge from that scene. When I say emerge, it was more like the forearm of a drowning man briefly breaking through the swirling surface of a dirty whirlpool. Slightly recognized now, they were largely shunned at the time and for quite a while afterwards, despite a one-time interview in *Sounds* with Gary Bushell, in which Andy had provocatively sported a Union Jack T-shirt. Dave told me later they'd wanted to take Bushell to an east end boozier, but he'd insisted on treating them both to a wine bar in Islington. Most of the legends of the halcyon days of anarcho had long since departed the street by the time we arrived, although there was Neil from Blyth Power, Martin from Faction, and possibly somebody from Hagar the Womb living at the far end of the street, as well as JC Marcus, of the pacifist PA. We were at the wrong end, in the Hackney Hell House, number 108.



Nick Sims was by no stretch of the imagination an anarcho, nor had he ever been. At Ampleforth he'd posed as a communist in order to get attention, and now he was masquerading as some kind of a quasi-nazi skinhead for the same reason, a little like Charles Bukowski in his short story, *Politics*. I have no idea whether he'd read the story, but he had introduced me to Bukowski, specifically his novel *Women*, saying that it helped him unwind after a long day spent at the chalk face, in seminars and tutorials with those right-on feminist bitches. He shared with Andy a bleach fixation, a fascination with all things white. One time I'd come down in the middle of the night for a piss and had my best and only socks ruined, Andy having bleached the kitchen lino (chequered black and white like their worldview, and I suppose mine too) and left it to soak in overnight, to kill all the germs. Another time the two of them went into a full rendition of *White Bread*, a song they'd written to the tune of Skrewdriver's *White Power*, whilst pulling out slices of *Mother's Pride* from the bag, ripping them to shreds and tossing them all across the kitchen. White bread, along with sausage, egg, beans, and brahn sawse, were what Nick considered to be proper food. My organic muesli and dates were almost verboten, unless there was nothing else to eat in the house. Dave and Emily Drake the folk singer largely kept to their rooms.

But Andy and Dave gave both myself and Emily a roof over our heads, and a couple of weeks later Nick moved in too. He befriended me, and together we would trek all over London to obscure gigs, and to watch him interview legends of the scene both known and unknown for his Cultural Studies dissertation, which would take the form of a fanzine, an idea quite wild and wacky at the time, although it's no doubt de rigueur now. It was to be called *Increasingly Right Wing*, its ten times photocopied front cover an image of his own right hand giving the V-sign, a dead wasp in the bottom left hand corner, the interviews either handwritten in his own distinctive cursive or typed up on Andy's classic Royal typewriter, the badly xeroxed photographs perfectly complementing the text and completing the effect. If it had been put together a few years later, with access to Microsoft Word and desktop publishing, it would have been ruined. But despite its content, most of which I can't quite recall, it was a classic of its genre, and with its interviews of junkies and former scenesters – a couple of old '77 punks turned junkie bikers, mates of Andy's named Blue and Punky Junky Paul; Steve from Epping, a sometime associate of Steve Ignorant's, who'd toured with Crass as a roadie before succumbing to alcoholism – it was really a precursor to books like this one, some twenty-five years later, whatever the pretend politics plastered across the pages that broke up the interviews.

Cultural Studies was seen then as something of a mickey mouse degree, in the same vein as media studies, outsiders viewing it as work-shy students watching television all day then writing down the occasional thought or comment, in the same way that creative writing students are seen now – penning a few poems over the course of three or four years, and other *I Hate Students Me Viz* comic reductive shit. One of Nick's student friends Sam, a sociology major, told me during a drinking session in the heavily-subsidised Barking bar that it wasn't a proper degree at all, it was like doing yer A-levels, you know what I mean? But I had never done me A-levels, so I didn't know what she meant. One time Nick had invited me along to one of those detested seminars and I'd sat there quietly, thinking of Bukowski's line that whenever he started a new job he expected to be fired in no time at all, so he just stood around quietly, and people mistook this for some kind of innate intelligence or inner power. I did say a couple of things, most likely casually referring to Bertolt Brecht (there'd been something by him on the telly with David Bowie in years ago), or that I'd once read *The Society of the Spectacle* when I was drunk, and Andrea Dworkin when I was hungover. Later, he told me the other students had asked him who I was and where I'd done my degree. They'd thought I seemed really intelligent. The Bukowski method seemed foolproof.

He was either living art or a bit of a twat, but we were all very young then, even Andy Martin, who claimed not to know when his birthday was because his mother had never told him and he didn't have a copy of his birth certificate; only history can absolve Nick now, but that history will never be written, and instead you have this, a true story. A couple of years later he disappeared as abruptly as he'd arrived, possibly to Russia with an older woman – there was a rumour that he'd gone over there to teach English as a foreign language, that he'd gotten someone pregnant and wanted to put himself beyond the reach of the CSA – but others said it was Birmingham. Occasionally I think I see him cycling through central London on his battered old





ten-speed, but I'm remembering him as he was a quarter of a century ago, so it would have to be one of his children, history repeating itself in period costume.

The thing I liked most about *Increasingly Right Wing*, other than its stark monochrome imagery, really quite reminiscent of Crass, was the near complete absence of band interviews. I can't recall now if there were any at all, but if there was even one it would surely have been comprised of an interview with the drummer from a band you like as not hadn't heard of, and focused on his upbringing in a religious cult on a council estate on the Isle of Skye. Or something. I suppose you could say it was done this way at least partly to facilitate the participant-observer interviews necessary to achieve Nick's degree, but you sensed from the first page that this was also very much a labour of love and rage, and that had he eschewed a formal education completely to get back at his privileged parents, he'd be doing it anyway, and in exactly this way. When I first entered anarchist punk, or whatever mouldering corpse there was left of it in 1983, one of the first things I did was to buy a block of A4 paper and a Pritt Stick and begin scribbling down in notebooks

my thoughts on anarchy and the vegan revolution, going to every gig and squat gig and squat that I could, discovering all the new noise and anger the mainstream had been for the most part denying me. But other than one or two abortive attempts, I never got as far as band interviews: I never knew what to ask that hadn't been asked countless times before in all the other fanzines, where it seemed repetition and a colour-by-numbers approach had long since become the norm. Occasionally you'd find something original, but it was like digging through dung for diamonds. Partly this was because I wasn't really a musician myself, despite having learned three or four chords and then tried to set myself up as some kind of an anarcho Billy Bragg, having neither the patience nor the discipline to practice and play with other people. But more than that, I just didn't think most of the music was all that good: the bedrock punk credo that anyone could do it was great in principle, but the practical truth seemed to be that many people couldn't, or else they lacked the aforementioned patience and discipline just as I did, but instead saw forming bands as some kind of a fast track to small town scene kudos and popularity. My cynicism was growing thick and fast after only a year in. And the bottom line was that it just wasn't about the music for me: it was about the words and the rudimentary politics, the injustice, the impotent rage. Obviously the music was a part of that, but for me it was a very small part. But that was the scene: everybody had to be either a musician, a writer or an artist, you had to be doing something, otherwise what was the point? There were very few bystanders.

And so it was that in 1985 I got together with someone I had once drunk scrumpy with down a canal in Somerset, wasting away the summer of 1984, smoking sycamore leaves for the headrush, an old art student and Bowie fan, and together we attempted to assemble an altogether different kind of fanzine: more of those stark monochrome images, with my old lyrics cut and pasted across the top as poetry. Pure visceral propaganda. I don't think it even had a name: it may have been called either WE'RE FULLY AWARE WE'RE DISPOSABLE, FULLY AWARE, or SMILING AND DYING. There were cut-ups of advertising slogans pasted throughout (WE'RE FULLY AWARE WE'RE DISPOABLE had come from an ad for Thorn EMI light bulbs), including the cover, and there were various interpretations as to its name. We photocopied as many copies as we could afford, which was not very many, and attempted to sell them at gigs at the Longacre Hall and elsewhere. There was no cover price. When people asked what was inside, we merely shrugged. We got back blank stares. They didn't understand. Where were Amebix and the Cheetah Chrome Motherfuckers? Where were all the vegan curry and fake cheese recipes? All the Molesworth peace camp reports? A contact address was given somewhere near the back, but what would people write in about? My discarding of the iambic pentameter in favour of a more atavistic approach? The use of a hydrogen bomb cloud as a background, and not that of the more traditional fission bomb? It was a shame, we both thought it was a pretty neat product. But my favourite page didn't involve any of my poetry. It was an ad from the local newspaper for fur coats that were on sale at the big department store in town, Jolly's. There was a picture of a naked woman, her modesty protected by an enormous fur coat, her head cocked to one side enticingly. We'd replaced her head with a grinning skull but left her hair there, altered the legend SUDDENLY I





BECAME A WARMER PERSON to SUDDENLY I BECAME A MURDERING BASTARD. Later, we made A5 flyers of the design and handed them out outside the store. The manager was not impressed. He called the police and we were moved on. He needn't have bothered. As with the poetry, no-one was much interested. We sold a few copies of the zine and then gave up. The world wasn't ready. No matter. The vegan revolution was coming soon. Then I moved to Swindon.

The house in Gorse Hill I moved into was fanzine city. There were four of us, and to the best of my recollection we all made a zine. There was *LSD* (Life, Sex and Death) by Sue from The Nursery, Simon from Disturbance From Fear indulged his scat fixation with something called *Revenge of the Dreaded Killer Turds*, his other half Fiona wrote a little book of poems that's she'd painstakingly copied all out by hand, with coloured pens, to save on the printing costs. I don't recall what mine was, although I'd probably brought the last few copies of *WE'RE FULLY AWARE WE'RE DISPOABLE/FULLY AWARE/SMILING & DYING* with me, to give

away to anyone who was or wasn't interested. I imagine what actually happened was that I started out with good intentions, wrote a couple of letters to bands with atrocious, clichéd interview questions, then put it all on the back burner and forgot about it. By this time my drinking was running full throttle, and when Sue went off to India for four months and Simon had hit the road too, hitch-hiking to gig after gig, following the new, improved Chumbawamba, I was left all alone with it. Fiona and Simon had broken up, and she'd moved into a house around the corner, and the people there didn't like me very much, and nobody I knew was really speaking to me any more. By the end of the summer the owner of the house had been let out of the psych ward and wanted to move back in, and that was that. I stayed in Swindon for another four or five years, moving from squat to squat, producing nothing, drowning myself as painlessly as I could. There was a lot of drink and a lot of drugs, and it took me that long to use up everyone else I knew. When I ran into Emily Drake the folk singer at a free breakfast for the homeless project, it turned out we'd both had enough of the Wiltshire Plains, that we knew the same people in Hackney, and away we went. A new chapter, or at least a paragraph break.

The drinking didn't stop of course, as structurally tidy as that might be. It was too late for it to stop, it had to run its awful course. After a few weeks at 108 Brougham Rd, Emily Drake the folk singer took me to one side and told me that as everyone else in the house was doing something creative, perhaps I ought to be doing something with myself other than drinking myself to death. She hadn't seen the fanzine(s) but she said she'd read my lyrics, and there must be something I could do. Still seething at the scene and the world and everything else, I put pen to paper and came up with a diatribe or three. Fred Baggs, who ran Redchurch, the recording studio The Apostles used on Redchurch St in Shoreditch, salvaged me an electric typewriter from a nearby skip. The letter A was missing, which I naturally thought was punk as fuck.

When we'd first landed on the doorstep of 108 Brougham Rd, sitting on the kitchen floor for want of a chair, talking to Andy Martin had been Robert Dellar. We said hello and I remembered his name as being that of the author of the notorious early 1980s Brighton fanzine *Straight Up*. He had a highly individual and recognisable house style, one that carried over many years later into the *Southwark MIND Newsletter*, *SAMH News* and *Splitting In Two* fanzine. He was a regular visitor to the house, and when I'd eventually cobbled together my A5 rant against conformity in the anarcho punk scene and repetitive band interviews, *Sheepscene*, he offered to do some free photocopying for me at his work. I placed the resulting copies with Active Distribution, approaching Jon at a council-sponsored free festival on Hackney Downs, telling him to just give them away if he could, then went back to Brougham Road to attack my crippled typewriter again. I recall waking early one morning, shuffling around in my room and hearing Andy and Nick talking in the kitchen. Have you seen this *Sheepscene* thing? Nick Sims asked. Yes, it's really well written isn't it? Andy replied. I am unsure to this day as to whether or not they'd heard me stirring and had intended themselves to be overheard, in order to boost my confidence and keep me going, and curtail my drinking; or if I'd just dreamt the whole thing. No matter. What followed were two short stories in fanzine form, *Soliloquy* and *100 Days in Hackney*. The first title Robert Dellar generously photocopied a load more of at Hackney MIND, the second I actually



managed to get properly printed at the Catford Copy Centre, where Andy and Dave (Andy produced Smile, Dave a comic, Harlequin) got their own titles mass-produced. I put a return address on both, borrowing The Apostles box number at the Centerprise bookshop in Dalston, but I don't think I ever heard anything back from anyone. I was beginning to see that this wasn't the point. You just had to do something, anything. You had to scream into the void. Shortly afterward, Robert started up the all too short-lived Spare Change Publishing, beginning with the punk short story anthology Gobbing, Pogoing and Gratuitous Bad Language, and eventually we (and five others) wrote a novel together, Seaton Point. They were all, really, like this volume, fanzines with spines.

None of this made any history, subcultural or otherwise, but what I think this book is trying to say is that everyone was doing it, even the drunks, and that the whole picture was so much greater than any of its parts. I began with febrile ranting and moved on to febrile ranting masquerading as fiction, because I suppose my worldview today is that there is no truth, everything is perception, everything is fiction; or as Alan Moore put it, artists use lies to tell the truth. Which somehow brings me back to Increasingly Right Wing, and Nick Sims, posing as a quasi nazi skinhead in the time of Stephen Lawrence and Blood and Honour, treading a very fine line, trying to get through his Cultural Studies degree, and producing what to me was a great work of art. As I've said at the outset, I have no idea where he is or what he's doing now, and I don't think I would want to know. If he ever saw this, I've no idea what his reaction would be. Like many of us, I expect he doesn't particularly like to think about the past, so he'd most likely just roll his eyes, tut; and I hope he'd be sneering too.





# GOING NOWHERE



Fifteen Shades of Grey

## FIFTEEN SHADES OF GREY

Rich Cross



To be honest, it looked pretty shit. Even I couldn't pretend otherwise. Where the ink should have been bold and black it was pasty grey; where there should have been sharp distinctions between black-and-white there was a murky monochrome spread. The hand-scratched headlines looked crude and simplistic; and, while the illustrations were legible they looked anything but eye-catching. A good proportion of the letter 'o's in the typescript appeared as solid 'blobs'; and if you looked more closely you could just make out an offset 'ghost' of the whole page contents just slightly to the left. I put the printout down, trying my best not to get inky fingerprint marks down the edges. A quick count of the 'acceptable' pile of printouts confirmed that there were around 40; so just another 160 to go then (not forgetting the double-sided overrun buffer, of course – let's allow another 20 for that). The set of 'rejected' pages stood at about seven or eight; then there were around a dozen sheets in the 'soak-up' stack (but, of course, I'd need to be careful only to use the ones that were fully dry for that, so as not to exacerbate the problem of unwanted ink transfer onto the rollers).

It's 1982, and on the floor in front of me stands a hand-cranked, A4 Gestetner duplicator; a basic desktop edition, and, for anyone born after 1975, a device as archaic and mysterious as the first steam engine. We had a love-hate relationship, me and that machine. I hated it, and it did everything in its power to demonstrate how much it loved that fact. In the loft of my parents' house, the complex and exacting business of printing issue three of *Catalyst* fanzine was now well underway. Aged between 14 and 17, our little subversive cell was completely committed to the project of the DIY political punk *samizdat*; and genuinely excited by the opportunity to give expression to our formative anarchist ideas in print. But there



was something of a tension between the expanding aspirations that we had to be subversive, underground publishers and the romance-free realities of getting legible ink marks onto uncreased paper.

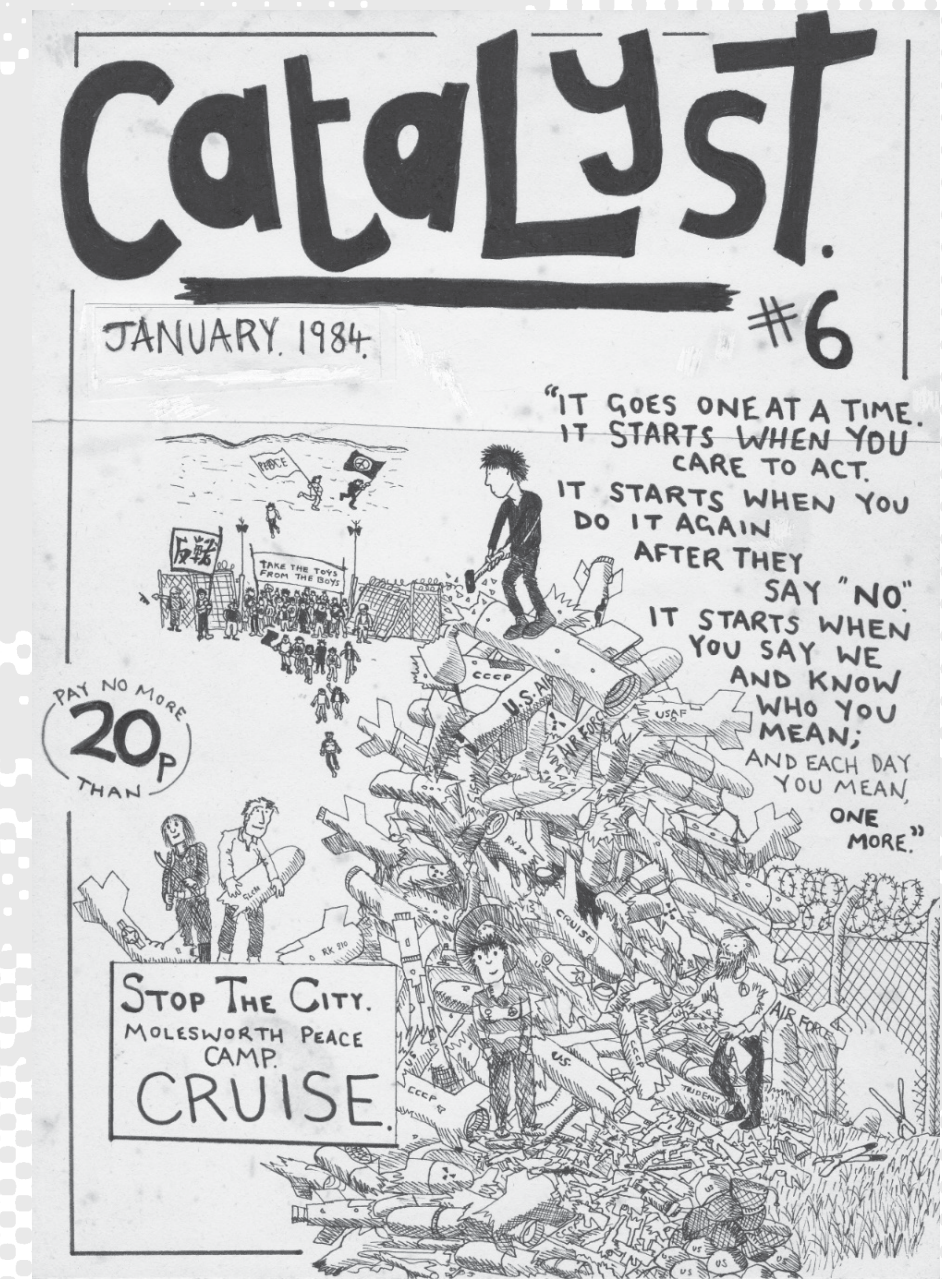
Looking back more than three decades to our earliest forays into fanzine publishing, it always strikes me as remarkable how basic the affordable methods of print production available to us were. In the early 1980s, the county of Devon was a backwater entirely free of the contamination of community print shops. When it came to making music, we had access to the tools we needed (guitars, backline, drum kit); our equipment was cheap, but it was fit for purpose. When it came to publishing, we started out one step up from the John Bull printing kit; our tool set was dysfunctional. Yes, we 'owned the means of production'; it's just that those means were *really mean*. Our enthusiasm remained boundless, so crap technology was not going to hold us back. 'In all our exuberance, people *try*', as Eve Libertine might have considered singing.

But as I picked up other fanzines at gigs and demonstrations, or had the rare fortune to browse the fanzine racks at the Rough Trade, Small Wonder or Freedom shops, it put things into the sharpest possible relief. Here was the evidence of fanzine publishers who had access to offset-litho; to colour screen-printing; to high-gloss paper; to a folded, stapled and finished A3 format; and who were able to include countless halftone photographic images and rich and complex columnar layouts; all lit up with sharp, pitch-black headings in must-have fonts. They could finance long print runs and secure shop distribution deals that would build circulation issue-by-issue; all the while keeping the cover price down. They exhibited style, élan and confidence and literacy in graphic design. Deprived of the benefits of any such editorial luxuries, our own meagre efforts simply did not bear comparison. All anarchist punk publishers might have been equal; but, when it came to the ability to exploit resources, it's just that some were more equal than others.

At the time, I was often disappointed at how far our weak aesthetics and poor production values seemed to impact on the clarity and impact of our messages. But now I think it's more reasonable to celebrate the work of *Catalyst*, and the huge number of other basically-produced no-nonsense, third-wave fanzines precisely *because* of their enforced simplicity. We happy band of no-frills, no glitz publishers made up the No Wave, the pub rock, the *Bullshit Detector* school of punk propagandists. If, as one memorably named fanzine suggested, *Ability Stinks*; then maybe we could agree that four-colour litho ink stinks too.

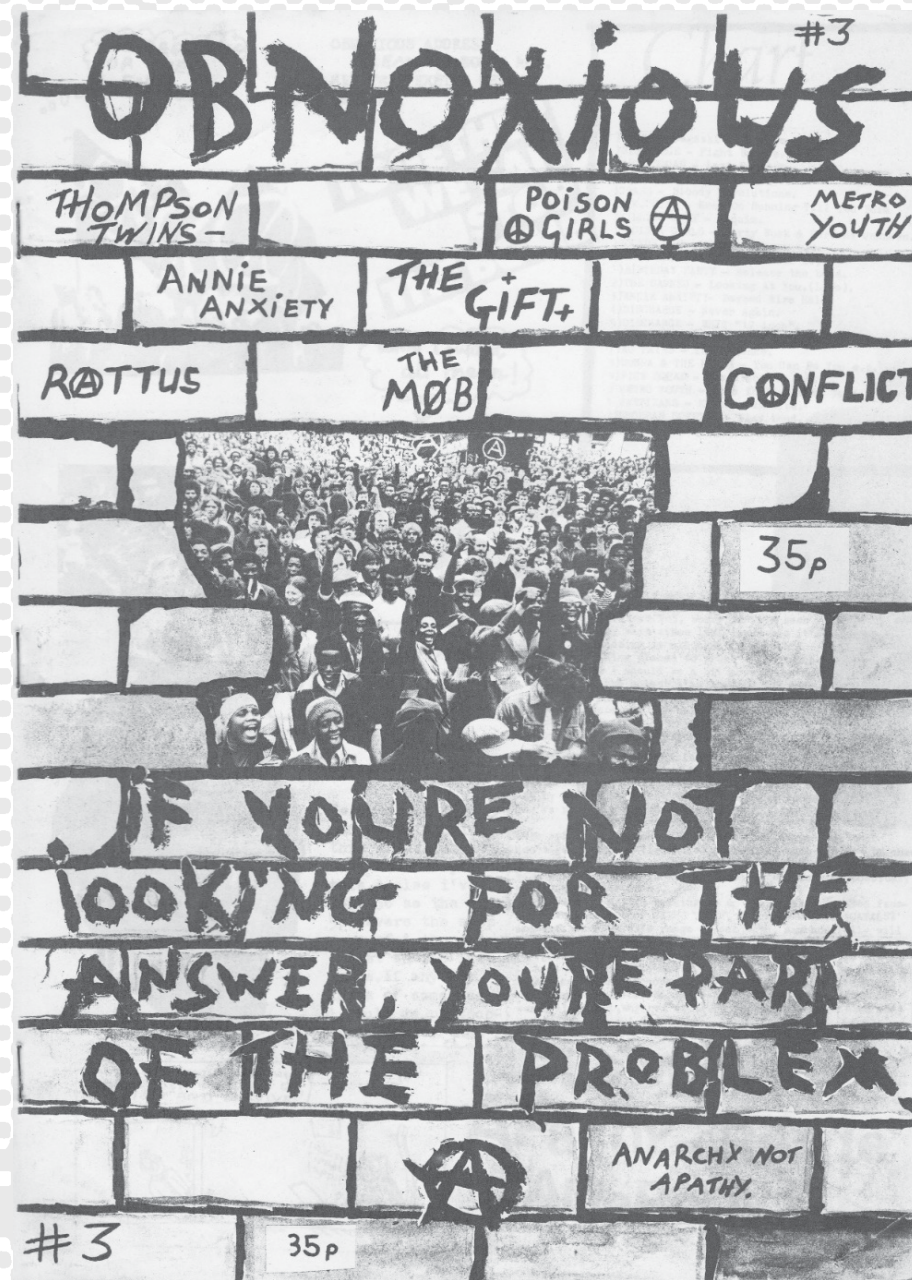
It's almost impossible to overstate how minimalist the publishing technologies we relied on were. We could have outsourced the printing to a high-street copyshop, but photocopying an entire issue would have cost us £2.00 a copy; and our cover price needed to be a tenth of that. So we single-side photocopied the front cover, and produced the rest ourselves on that manual duplicator. This old-school device grabbed a single sheet of paper and pulled it through a set of rollers on one of which was some sort of stencil. That stencil had holes punched through the non-porous layer, through which ink was squeezed onto the paper when the rollers connected. The first stencil we used were the cheapest possible. They were the

ones you fed into a typewriter and typed onto directly; every key stroke left an indelible impression on the stencil's surface. If you hit the 'o' key too hard, you cut out a circle in the stencil; if your typing was too tentative the printed letter would appear faint, or only in part. If you made a mistake, tough. (There was some neon-orange correction fluid that resealed holes in the stencil, but the stench of it stripped the lining from your lungs, and each application was impossible to target on a single letter, so your brush strokes ended up splodging 'corrections' across words and characters you didn't intend to 'fix').



As you typed, how did you know that your article would fit into the available space? You didn't. If you found yourself running out of room, you had to rewrite on the fly. 'All the news that's printed to fit', as one journalist wit once observed of their craft. When the typing was done, you gingerly pulled the stencil out and etched on headlines and illustrations with a special 'stencil scratcher'. Just enough pressure to





make an impression, not so much that you broke through the second layer. The only 'fonts' that you could use were the ones that you could outline by hand, and then carefully shade with simple hatching. The only pictures, images or icons you could include were ones you were able to scratch out yourself. (Imagine trying to draw onto waxed paper using a short, blunt pencil whilst wearing an oven glove that's much too large, and you get a sense of the level of sophistication possible). The stencil was perforce quite fragile, so there was a real risk at this point of tearing a hole in the thing. If that happened (and, in the early days, it happened a lot), there was no 'undo' function. You binned the stencil and started typing again.

Once the stencil set was ready; it was time to print. We picked up our first duplicator from the classifieds section of the local paper. Our pride at becoming 'independent printers of subversive texts' lasted right up until we used it for the first time. Far heavier to shift than its small size suggested, it was, under the cover, a very simple set

of belts and rollers fed by an ink reservoir. Tearing the backing off the stencil, you hooked the set of cardboard holes at its top (no, really) onto the head of the main drum and pulled the thing taut around the drum surface, smoothing it down as you went; allowing the ink to act as an adhesive. This was, in itself, a risky process; too much tension on the stencil and it could rip. If it slipped off its moorings, you had to peel the thing off and start again; ink sticking to everything, you included. Hand cranking through the first test sheets gave you the chance to tweak the ink levels (to try to correct lighter or darker bands on the printed page); and curse if the stencil had slipped off-centre (so that the printed page would come out askew). Printing 'for real' meant running pages through at steady rate, keeping an eagle eye on the state of the ink and the paper feed.

That would have all been workable had duplicators been reliable machines. But they weren't. Without warning, paper would stick, jam or tear itself apart on the rollers; and, if you didn't react quickly enough, ink-soaked paper mâché would shred itself across every surface, each bit of which you then had to locate and pick out by hand. If a sheet of paper stalled in the feeder and refused to load, the drums would still come together, so that the ink that should have gone onto the page instead left its imprint across all the feed rollers. You had no option but to stop and to run through dry scrap A4 to soak up that unwanted ink, so that you carry on printing. If you didn't, those phantom prints would appear on both sides of the next 10-20 pages you ran through. As you were usually double-siding those pages, you needed to print an additional safety buffer set of pages (to allow for problems with printing the reverse side); and then allow those pages to dry completely (usually overnight) before attempting the other side. You also had to watch out for multiple sheets feeding through at the same time in a clump; a particular hazard when double-siding, as it could leave you with an unwelcome phenomenon at the collating stage: 'This page has been left unintentionally blank'.

The worst position to find yourself in was the need to reprint a particular page when the numbers came up short. That meant trying to coax an already ink-sodden (and now even more rip-prone) stencil back onto the printing drum. With the fabric of the thing now unevenly stretched, the chances of doing so without getting creases in the stencil (meaning blank spots or ink splurges on the page) were thin; the chances of successfully removing any creases that appeared thinner still.

Printing a couple of hundred copies of a twenty-page (forty-side) fanzine was therefore usually a long and laborious process. But as we collated and stapled the finished results, adding on the crisp and sharp photocopied cover, it always felt like it was worth it. I can still remember how stupidly, ridiculously proud we were of our efforts, and how keen we were to share the fruits of our labours. Our bargain basement print quality did not pass unnoticed. Some people in the local scene (such as it was) commented on it directly, and usually negatively. One letter from Richard Famous of Poison Girls was much more constructive in its (more than reasonable) criticism. "Do you think you might be able to include some more photos and pictures in future issues; just to help make the magazine stand out a bit more?", he asked gently; before adding quickly: "Small point; you're doing really good work."



And while there was no doubt that our articles, features, interviews and reviews had all the rigour, literacy and intellectual gravitas that you might expect from a clutch of first-time teenage authors, I'm still impressed about what we wrote *about*. Like many other young punk writers for whom their fanzines provided their first publishing platform, three recurring drivers seem to have informed most of our work: *a desire for discovery* (sharing our efforts to uncover new political and cultural ideas); *a keen sense of anger* (about the iniquities and wrongs of the world); and *the need to reflect frustration* (the chasm between what we saw was necessary to remake the world around us and what was actually happening politically). As well as the intricacies of punk culture, different issues addressed the themes of anarchism, anti-militarism and direct action, vegetarianism and animal liberation, gender politics, the politics of the six counties of the north of Ireland, and the anti-nuclear and the punk priorities of the hour. Throughout all of it, we struggled to breach the gulf between the type of magazines we wanted to be able to produce, and the ones that we could. When we came up short, as we usually did, it wasn't for want of trying.

We didn't interview many bands, but when we did we always tried to avoid the dreaded 'what are your views?' style of questioning. We *hated* that question, and it came up (and in that exact phrasing) a lot. It suggested that 'views' were a soundbite-and-slogan package that you picked out along with a backline and a logo. 'What are our views about *what?*' we always replied in our own band's responses to such editorial idiocy. 'The Middle East question? ALF strategy? Or the latest Colin Jerwood controversy?' We did talk to bands (Dirt, Poison Girls and Conflict amongst others), but it was always active political engagement that excited us most.

Inspired by many other publications, I was keen to be able to produce A5 (booklet size) editions. Initially, we produced a standard A4 format, and then folded it into a wraparound landscape photocopy cover, stapling it along one edge (a sort of pseudo-A5 look). There was no way to type into a stencil 'side on' (to create two side-by-side pages on a single sheet). In retrospect it seems ridiculous, but the solution was to acquire a typewriter with an extended, and much wider, carriage (such esoteric things did exist in 'the old days'), along with a long-armed stapler that could reach the middle of a stack of folded A4 sheets. The wide typewriter was a massive beast, which took up most of any desk you dragged it on top of, but it meant that you could feed the stencil in *sideways*, and so type up the artwork for two booklet-size pages. This horizontal layout meant, though, that the two adjacent 'pages' on the typed stencil would not appear next to each other in the completed, collated fanzine; so you had to anticipate and track the finished layout with meticulous care as you worked, to ensure that the finished pages would appear in the correct sequence when the thing was printed and folded together.

A few issues in, 'heat stencils' were a revelation (although that was probably a reflection of how low our expectations before that were). Unlike the type-and-scratch version, the image held on these next-generation stencils was sealed by being fed through a set of heated rollers. This transformed our editorial method. It meant that you could produce cut-and-paste artwork (albeit still monochrome) in any way you liked, and then 'burn' the results onto the stencil. It cost more to prepare, and still produced print closer to the dark grey register than to the black, but it lifted the

readability and quality of our design no end, and meant we could work with line-drawings, high-contrast photos, Letraset and text of different sizes. It also allowed to to include more of Phil Hedgehog's brilliant and original punk cartoon strips and panels; which helped to light-up our design.

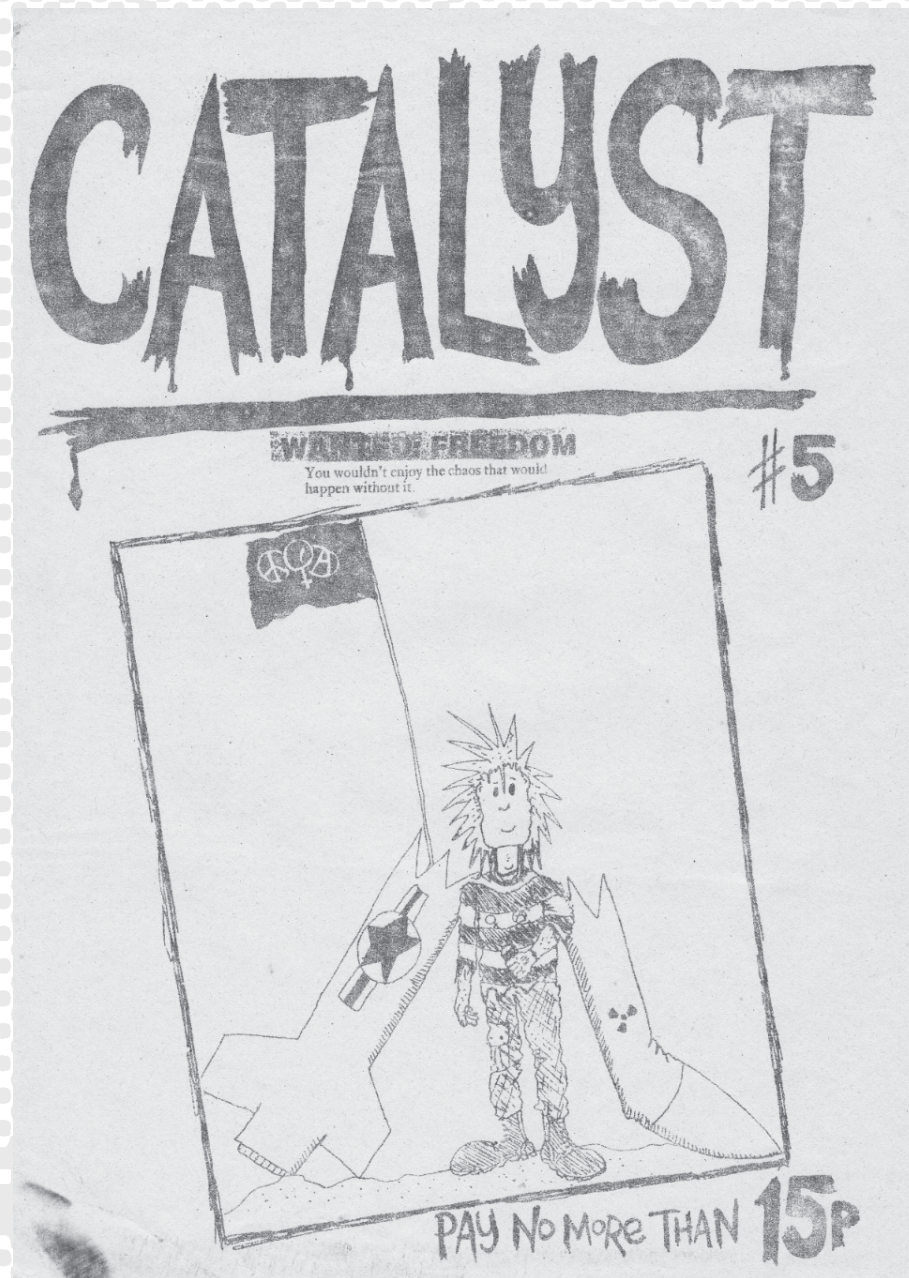
Months later, we drove to an estate agents in Aldershot to buy the motor-driven duplicator they'd listed in *Exchange & Mart*. I tried to lowball them on the listed price but, as a surly young punk (dressed in black cotton-drill, tatty donkey jacket and baseball boots), a misfit in an office full of 'suits', they outclassed me in their negotiation skills. They probably should have worked in property sales. We paid full price and loaded the behemoth into the back of the Mini Clubman. It weighed as much as an anvil (and felt like it weighed as much as all of Anvil), but it was better, ran at a faster page-rate and produced more consistent results. It still retained all the mischievous, uncooperative, obstructive qualities of its predecessor, but we could crank stuff out with a little less torment; and we were anyway by that point becoming more experienced print technicians. From the very beginning we were keen to maximize shared access to our publishing resources; offering at-cost (and free labour) printing services to others in the scene. We might not have been good (in the quality stakes) but we were fast and we were cheap.

In the space of a couple of years we printed a whole variety of things for punk comrades: including issues of *Obnoxious* (Exeter), *Going Nowhere* (Guilford; I *think*) and *Radical Hedgehog* (Forest of Dean) and leaflets and flyers for the anarchist-pacifist Black Dove group (Norwich). We sold copies of *Catalyst* in local alternative shops (the hippies who ran the Caterpillar second hand vinyl store in Exeter agreed, with a straight face, to accept the 1p-per-copy retail cut of the cover price that we proposed), and at every gig and demo that we went to (except on the Stop the City actions; we had other priorities on those days).

There's a marked improvement in the quality of our writings over time (from an admittedly weak baseline in issue one), as we gained in confidence, read more political writings ourselves and made greater efforts to set aside abstract polemic and instead connect our writings more effectively to the activism we were involved in. A good proportion of copies were distributed through the post, as news of each new issue filtered through numerous overlapping networks of contacts. Over time we received hundreds of twenty-pence pieces, taped to letters and cards, and loose stamps, from across the country, throughout western Europe, north America and Australia, asking for copies. Most of my own personal fanzine collection was built up through swapping copies with other fanzine editors across the globe.

The 'honour system' of the exchange worked extraordinarily well. Either you sent a speculative copy of your own work to a well-reviewed or recommended fanzine somewhere else on the planet; or you received a copy of someone else's fanzine out-of-the-blue asking you to reciprocate. In either case, 'mutual fulfilment' was the norm, whoever initiated contact. It was a rare thing to be let down. Connecting with the producers behind fanzines such as *Acts of Defiance* (Sunderland) and *The Return of the Naive* (Chesterfield) was also, for me, the catalyst (if you will) for some critically important new friendships from the original anarchist punk era.



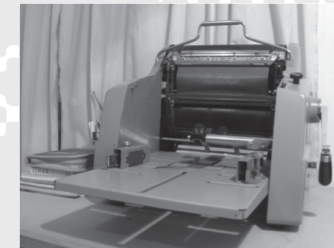


As well as the postal communications, fanzine production involved travel too. I can still vividly remember staggering towards Digbeth coach station, straining under the weight of around two dozen reams of recycled paper (picked up from the cheapest supplier I could find, in the city) strapped to my back. The coach driver was reluctant to treat them as 'luggage', but, to my huge relief, relented. That would have been a hitchhike back home I would not have relished. Seeing *Catalyst* on display in Housmans bookshop on London's Caledonian Road (alongside Annie Anxiety's *Tropical Depression*, Andy Palmer's *The Eklektic*, Poison Girls' *The Impossible Dream* and many others) felt like a huge validation and endorsement. I also dragged those monstrous duplicators to first Bradford, then Birmingham, then back to Exeter and eventually to Nottingham as I moved around the country; and carried on punk printing. By the time we produced the final two issues of *Catalyst*, our writing collective had halved in size; but these were easily the strongest editions we produced (the best looking, the most assured, the most

convincing). There were fewer rants; some surprisingly considered reflections on the challenging interplay of punk and politics; more reportage and commentary from the frontline, and hardly any band interviews to distract the reader from 'the important stuff'.

By 1984, the range of production services we could access had expanded. We even found semi-legitimate ways to use the photocopying facilities of a number of heavily-GLC-subsidised community print shops in London, securing us the best quality design and print that we had ever achieved. It also meant that somebody else did the physical printing. They even shipped the results back to us; so no back-breaking stumble to Paddington station, weighed down with copies, for me. Yet, without over romanticising our original back-to-basics print operations, I think we maybe downplayed something important along the way as our production methods improved. For all their anaemic and smudgy appearance, and the badly-typed adolescent think-pieces they contained, there was an unapologetic immediacy to those early issues; the print equivalent, if you like, of the first three-chord thrashes that our band wrote.

We were never going to be able to offer a free flexi-disc or a full-colour pull-out, but we were able to give full voice to the evolving anarchist ideas that we were experimenting with, and – like countless other dead-basic fanzine producers – received encouragement, support and validation from a random selection of like-minded (or curious or critical) punks and other malcontents from across the world. In a wholly analogue era, it still feels astonishing that, in the early 1980s, copies of a scrappy, little-known Devon fanzine made their way to readers in Turin, Berlin, New York, Adelaide and far beyond; as did thousands of other fanzines, traversing that expanding network in all directions.



Copies of *Catalyst* fanzine are now available to review in the county council's Local Studies archive. The subject headings in the catalogue record provide a pithy summary of the publication's provenance: 'Devon / Exeter / Anarchism / Periodicals / 1982-1984' (although we nearly managed to get issue one out before the end of 1981). 'Irregular, discontinued', it concludes. Well, I can't argue with either of those claims. Reluctant to let them go, I held onto those duplicators way longer than was necessary or useful. Rusted, mouldy and congealed, they were finally consigned from the cellar to the scrapheap during an overdue house clear-out. It took two of us to haul the damn things up the stairs and into the skip, as they resisted us to the last.

Guitars, drums and amplifiers are still the stock-in-trade tools of present-day rock, punk and 'alternative' bands. But to members of the Instagram generation, the methods we used to produce our first punk fanzines will appear unimaginably prehistoric. Our printing presses, anachronisms from an unlamented age. That's as maybe; but the impulses that drove our work remain just as relevant today, however outmoded the original means. This is a phrase. This is another. This is a third. Now go publish something.

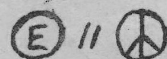




# London C.N.D. rally: oct. 22nd...., AN ANARCHIST VIEWPOINT;;



A quarter of a million people marching to a secluded little spot in Hyde Park to ask politely for a "Nuclear Freeze". Do they really think they will ever change anything this way? What would a 'nuclear freeze' prove? The World's leaders would still have the capacity to destroy our planet several times over, even if they did halt the escalation of the arms race tomorrow.



Every year it happens, every year, same place same time, the same people, the same old bullshit. "Please Mrs. Thatcher, if you wouldn't mind TOO much, could you stop planning world destruction?" Surely people must realise, surely some of these nuclear families who turn up in Hyde Park every year trying to 'Ban the Bomb', somewhere amongst their guilty feelings about the neighbours seeing them on T.V., their isolation, paranoia, their ultimate fear of each other, some of these people must realise that their anger, fear or frustration they feel over the build up of the arms race is being utilised by power hungry politicians, even if they won't admit it to themselves. Every year a Labour Party politician addresses the C.N.D. masses; "Vote for me! I'll halt the arms race!" Do you think any politician doesn't manipulate people to further his/her own personal aims? The Labour Party; the very party who in the late sixties brought POLARIS nuclear missiles and submarines to this country after getting into power by promising not to. PROTEST AND SURVIVE?



As anarchists we are against ALL wars, ALL violence, all control through fear of violence (AUTHORITY), and we want to make this known. We want to communicate our hopes for a truly peaceful world, based on trust not fear, love not hate, co-operation, individual responsibility. In order to make this known we have to confront the state. Thatcher, the Government and show these people up for what they really are; power hungry, selfish, inhuman, warped, INSANE. Many anarchists' lives are a constant confrontation with the state because we try to live our own lives, free from authority and violence. We believe in Direct Action in terms of direct confrontation. We don't just go to Hyde Park once a year and say "Please Mrs. T. We are constantly working towards a peaceful world. As a result of this, being in a minority, we are constantly walked all over."

WHILE his classmates may dream of a career in journalism, 14-year-old Clem Page is owner and editor of his magazine.

Rejoicing in the unlikely title of "Obnoxious," it is one of a growing number of "fanzines," magazines put together by dedicated teams of individuals on a specialist subject (in this case, punk) and usually on a shoestring budget.

Clem, of 17, South Avenue, Heavitree, is a pupil at Queen Elizabeth School, Crediton and spends most of his free evenings and weekends at work on "Obnoxious."

He said: "I had seen a lot of other fanzines and this made me want to start one of my own. Although it started as a hobby, it has now grown into something much bigger."

There were 500 copies of the last issue printed, but this was rather costly.

"That issue cost me £150," he said, "so I'm going to have to cut down for issue number three and print only 300 copies."

"I was able to borrow some of the money for the last issue on the understanding that it

would be returned when the magazine was sold and I think that, with the distribution network I have, I could probably sell a thousand copies of each issue."

"Obnoxious" is on sale at Exeter shops like Pitts and Catapilla, but it also travels further afield.

An independent shop in London called "Rough Trade" sells copies of the fanzine and from there it is often bought by foreigners.

Clem said: "I receive a lot of letters from places like Yugoslavia, Poland and Finland from people who have bought the fanzine in London and I recently interviewed a Finnish punk band called 'Rattus' who wrote to me."

Interviews are a regular feature in "Obnoxious" and Clem conducts most of them himself.

## WHEN JOHN MET CLEM

Rich Cross

# Clem is an editor at 14

By JOHN GULLIDGE

"I think I've interviewed most of the Exeter bands," he said, "and they've all been really helpful. In one case, I did an hour-long interview with a band just before they went on stage. We were so engrossed in the interview that they went on late."

"If I can't interview them in person, I will send them a list of questions which they can answer on paper."

"When I started the fanzine, it was mostly interviews and record reviews. But now, I have started to get more of my own personal views into it, on subjects like politics, C.N.D., feminism and vegetarianism."

"I'm not in it to make money just to provide an alternative to the usual magazines on the market. It's basically for punks, but I hope

that others will read it too."

"It really depends on what you define as punk. My idea of it is a positive, creative force and not anarchic vandalism or whatever. I believe in trying to make a better life for ourselves and fighting for that in a constructive way and not by sheer vandalism and destruction."

As "Obnoxious" has proved so successful in its two issues, Clem is now hoping to expand the number of people connected with the fanzine by forming a collective with two friends.

He said: "At the moment, I hope to keep doing 'Obnoxious.' When I leave school I want to go to art college with a view to becoming involved in alternative theatre and a band."



CLEM Page with the launch issue of "Obnoxious." Picture: Sculpter Photography

IT COULD HAVE been painfully embarrassing; and patronising too. But as things turned out, the interview was surprisingly supportive. On Friday 5 March 1982, the Exeter Weekly News published a human interest feature with the then fourteen-year-old Clem Page, "owner and editor" of the city's *Obnoxious* fanzine; and a short-lived collaborator in the activities of Catalyst and of Inky Hand Press.

The piece was written by John Gullidge, a local journalist in his early twenties, with little knowledge of or interest in punk. He'd attended the same secondary school that all of the founding members of our first serious punk band had gone to, but he'd been a few years our senior.

The article is a fascinating insight into the perception of the mysterious world of the small-town fanzine by a small-town newspaper. The paper's interest in Clem's "novelty value" is matched by Clem's own matter-of-factness about his work. And if London comes across as a far away and cosmopolitan place, then "abroad" is revealed as even more remote; somewhere "other" that "foreigners" return to, furtively clutching "fan-zines" acquired in suspicious sounding shops in the dark alleyways of the capital. In retrospect, it's also a revealing moment-in-time snapshot in the lives of two individuals who will both go on to explore unexpected creative paths.



Even amongst the burgeoning community of fanzine producers, Clem was an atypically early starter. At the age of thirteen he was in correspondence with Crass, conducting postal interviews with Flux of Pink Indians, Dirt, The Cravats and many other bands, and, in October 1981, joined our collective in-person interview of Poison Girls. He was a keen (and a forcefully opinionated) reviewer of tapes and records, and of any live gigs that (in a time before all-age-shows) he was able to sneak his way into. He was a great advocate for all local Exeter bands in and beyond the punk milieu, but remained a fierce defender of the do-it-yourself punk ethos. His tolerance of punk bands who were seduced by the dark forces of commercial corruption was non-existent.

Clem was as enthusiastic and committed a punk propagandist as he was an appalling typist. His prose could be caustically rough, and his interest in accurate spelling and the norms of sentence structure was minimal. But he was always supremely self-confident, and completely unconcerned by how interviewees, promoters or door-staff might judge him because of his youth and inexperience. He also had an obvious talent for cut-and-paste design and graphic collage. In fact, he was a better designer than he was an author. Musical performance wasn't his thing either. When he formed a two-piece band with an equally young friend, we helped with equipment, with tuning and with transport; but the project didn't gel. And when I say that they produced an awful racket, I don't mean it in a good way.

**‘An independent shop in London called “Rough Trade” sells copies of the fanzine and from there it is often bought by foreigners.’**

For those of us who were four and five years older than him, Clem could sometimes be hard work to be around, as the age difference periodically loomed large. You had to temper your reaction to those of his more outlandish and implausible anecdotes from his experiences in the punk front line, so as not to offend. He did also have his idiosyncrasies. He took a perverse pleasure in playing the studio sides of *Stations of the Crass* at the wrong speed, despite my repeated objections. “*I think it sounds better,*” he insisted, as an unhurried Ignorant droned (at some length): “*The traaain naah staaandin' non plaaatform foouour...*” But there was nothing insincere about his belief in punk as a “*positive, creative force*”, and he was genuinely animated by the idea of “*trying to make a better life for ourselves and fighting for that in a constructive way*”, notwithstanding his reservations about “*anarchic vandalism or whatever*”.

A few months after this interview took place, and not long after the publication of Obnoxious issue four (easily the best edition to date), Clem had a dramatic rethink. He renounced his associations with punk and dispensed with the records, tapes and other fanzines he has collected in an intense couple of years, with scarcely a second thought. There was nothing we (the prospective members of his putative “collective”) could do to persuade him, whilst encouraging him in his exploration of new ideas, to be less absolute in his rejection of his punk identity. In retrospect, it was entirely in-character that he would make total black-and-white commitments

in that way, and that his adolescent obsessions would prove to be transitory. He was no longer a punk, and the matter was closed. We rarely saw him again after that, although that decision was not of our making. We had clearly become unwelcome memories of an abandoned identity.

Clem harnessed and developed his creative potential in the decades that followed in new directions. He did get to “art college”, though I’ve no idea what became of the plans for a new band or the “alternative theatre” idea. Today Clem is a successful “contemporary artist working with painting, film, and installation”, exhibiting art in shows and galleries across Europe and beyond, and splitting his work time between Berlin and Bristol. It’s no great surprise that there’s no mention of *Obnoxious* in the publications CV on his web site (<http://www.clementpage.com/>). There is, though, more than an echo of a punk graphic aesthetic in at least some of his pieces.

Interestingly, and entirely co-incidentally, journalist John Gullidge would go on to develop impressive genre fanzine credentials of his own. After being made redundant from the *Exeter Weekly News*, Gullidge, a long-standing fan of horror, gore and grindhouse movies, set up the respected *Samhain* magazine, which from modest beginnings would go on to claim the status as “*Britain’s longest running horror film magazine*”.

Reflecting on the experience of starting the magazine in an interview in May 2016, Gullidge recalled memories that would be familiar to many punk fanzine producers: “*The mag itself was printed and collated at this ancient printing press at the bottom of this dingy alley in the back streets of Exeter. [Designer] Scott [Bartlett] and I would often pull all-nighters in the days running up to press deadline and then I’d often be collating the pages together through the night. The machinery was very archaic and often the finished magazines would be trimmed at odd angles resulting in tons of rejected copies and some uneven ones (which I nicknamed “Toblerone Copies”).*” As circulation and reputation grew, 72 issues of *Samhain* were produced; before Gullidge had his own “rethink” and decided to “go travelling” instead.

Today Gullidge lives in Malaysia, and works a company managing immersive live theme park attractions; often for film franchises. A professional photographer, and with his interest in the horror genre undiminished, Gullidge is a regular film and TV convention attendee (<https://www.facebook.com/john.gullidge>). In contrast to Clem, he is more than happy to discuss, and to see value in, his formative fanzine past.



# STOP 'THE CITY'

And All Around Was Darkness

## SEPT 29th

### A 'DAY OF RECKONING'

The City is a small and crowded area of London, where the banks, multinationals, profiteers and huge british companies have enormous head offices. Street after street of bleak concrete and windows that you can't see in.

Behind the blinds, out of sight, high up in spacious mahogany offices, decisions are made. Decisions that affect the lives of millions of people all over the world. The only people who ever rise to these heights of power and control are the cold and calculating, white men of privileged backgrounds. They make decisions and make millions, they make decisions and ruin lives.

They are safe, secure and go unchallenged.

Overweight, impotent, selfish and smug, the cliché is so true, it's frightening.

Normally, few people venture into this crazy world of profit based madness. The streets of The City are normally left to the businessmen for them to hurry along in their self-importance. Normally, we keep quiet as they make their profits. Normally, we don't speak out as they fund the arms trade and keep the machinery of control well oiled. Normally.

September 29th 1983 was not a normal day for The City. It was a day when thousands came to protest against the war plans of these people. To say "NO" to war, and to those who would profit from death. To disrupt the working of The City.

"to say no to the life stealers.... to say no to the death dealers."

STOP THE CITY (if you can)

Well, where to begin? Ah yes - on a freezing September 29th at about 5.00a.m. I fall out of bed and, pulling on some rags, eat a hearty breakfast of the kitchen, several semi-detached houses and a car park, (all vegan of course). Soon I'm on a bus to Gloucester where I pay a lump sum to british rail for a day return. And so at 8.00a.m. I'M chuffing off on an experience of a lifetime. LONDON is a very ugly city and Paddington's no exception, (the station, not the bear), and neither is the tube, (I'm sure you can guess what criticism was going to be here).

So, it's 11.00a.m., I am trampling into THE CITY. Luckily I bump into a very sweet and cheerful anarcho type who's enjoying every minute to the full - leafletting and talking to everybody walking about. We get talking and try to find the main group of protestors/wierdos (which didn't take long I can tell you). "Well, I'll be buggered", I remember saying. A mass of hippys, anarch-fems, subversives, and loving caring spiky tops meet my gaze. Wow! this is going to be enjoyable. I met Rich very quickly and got down to various things like seeing what was going to happen.

The actual organisation of S.T.C. was notable by its absence which was the real lynchpin of its success/failure - a) because there was no organisation, no mass action could come together, but b) because it was hundreds of individual actions, the Police couldn't deal with it. The police were getting annoyed and by the stories I was hearing, violent as well. Shortly, I could see for myself - arrests were made for the usual pathetic reasons - "Obstruction"; you know, crossing the road, stepping off the kerb etc. One punk was arrested standing right next to me for no reason at all! I now firmly believe that the boys from the met. are all ex-tag wrestlers judging by the exotic range of arm + head locks they were distributing freely to the crowd. "Ello, 'Ello, 'Ello, CRUNCH". The main body of the action kept to the square in front of mansion house but soon a large lump of "Subversive types" had gathered at the Guildhall to shout at Policemen and watch for the arrested to be tried. (Apparently, they were packed 40 to a cell and starved for a fair while). A crowd of happy, jeering musicians struck up a dodgy tune to which a couple of women danced up and down around the row of policemen that were in the road. ("hey, I thought we were the ones obstructing everything!?!"), who were looking at us with faces like thunder and "Fill Kill Kill" etc. Well, if we weren't stopping the City, we were making the Police unhappy which is a sure sign that you must be doing something dangerous !!

As the day wound to an end we had been pushed, shoved, shouted at, charged by maniacs in transits and crushed by horses - all in a day's job I suppose. The Workers in the City had spent most of the time looking out of the window, so at least some work was stopped by that method.

Stop The City wasn't the "End the Arms Trade in 12 Hours", success that it was made out to be before-hand, but it wasn't a flop and a non-event as some might think.

What more can I say? Watch out for March '84 and have a nice day.

## PROTEST AGAINST WAR

I'M ONLY DOING MY JOB!



**STOP 'THE CITY'**  
ANTI-WAR PROTEST  
+ CARNIVAL  
THURS  
SEPT 29th 6-6pm  
Come early..

Washington - Paris - Berlin - Moscow - Peking - LONDON .....resist now.....  
In the capitals of the world, war is being planned and financed.....

The Stranger in the Pit: Women, Animal Advocacy and Anarcho-Punk

## THE STRANGER IN THE PIT: WOMEN, ANIMAL ADVOCACY AND ANARCHO-PUNK

Francis Stewart

The very fragility of record in such societies makes memory all the more precious, its expressions both sadder and more triumphant. (Shippey, 97)

As we mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of punk there has been numerous events, from gigs, talks, exhibits, films, books and Joe Corre's 'stunt' of burning memorabilia in protest of the continued commodification and corporatization of punk. Missing from far too many of these events has been the voice and experiences of women, people of colour, and LGBTQI+ people. Viv Albertine protested the erasure of women from the British Museum's Punk 1976 - 1978 exhibit by defacing it. Crossing out the names of bands The Clash, The Sex Pistols, and The Buzzcocks (all comprised entirely of men) Albertine scrawled in women-led groups The Slits, X-Ray Spex, and Siouxsie and the Banshees. To ensure her message was clear, she added, "What about the women!!" and her signature.

An important question and one which needs answering now as we face the reality that those who were involved in first and second wave punk are in their 50s and 60s. Their memory is therefore, as Shippey notes above, becoming ever more fragile as the records of their exploits and experiences are focused increasingly on what appeals to mass markets or conventional museums. This chapter seeks to try and present some of the experiences of a small group of women who were involved with what they termed anarcho-punk.

### Strange Encounters

Within the field of post-colonial studies, Sara Ahmed has created the fluid concept of 'the stranger'. (2000) Whilst traditionally post-colonialism has concerned itself with the concept of 'The Other' in relationship to the ontological status of the subject, Ahmed focuses on the tensions and contradictions implicit within the instrumentalization of 'strangeness' in the production of embodiment and community. Beginning with the concept of the alien she notes:

The alien is not simply the one whom we have failed to identify ('unidentified flying objects'), but is the one whom we have already identified in the event of being named as alien: the alien recuperates all that is beyond the human into the singularity of a given form. The alien hence becomes a fetish. (p. 2)

She then develops the notion of 'Stranger fetishism' in an attempt to highlight how many aspects of society are contingent on a process through which the stranger becomes an abstracted, universalised figure: "Stranger fetishism is a fetishism of figures: it invests the figure of a stranger with a life of its own insofar as it cuts 'the stranger' off from the histories of its determination." (p. 5 Ahmed's emphasis). That is, a fetishization of 'strangers' that serves to bolster Western agency and identity-construction at the expense of strangers, who are thereby rendered as static, lacking in agency, and as pre-existing objects (rather than subjects) of knowledge.

OPPOSE THE PLANS FOR WAR



This chapter is arguing that within the increasingly accepted history or, rather more accurately, presentation of history of anarcho-punk, women, people of colour and LGBTQI+ people are to some extent the fetishized stranger. That is, they are represented or sometimes forced to experience punk in such a way as bolster white, working class, cisnormative, male agency and identity. They are fetishized as an example of how punk rejected or broke barriers such as race, class, and gender, yet they remain the strangers in the pit. Their experiences sublimated for a standard narrative that strips them of their agency other than as something that can be fetishized and ultimately still conforms to the agency and identity of the dominant agents. Thus within their own subculture they are rendered as strangers, spoken for not conversed with.

Your exclusion don't need to be proven,  
Because it's how I feel, no, how you make me feel.  
From the first time, that "hold my stuff" line,  
How it made me feel, no, how you make me feel.  
Is it my job just to hold your arm, to smile and nod?  
Just a pair of tits, your waifish sidekick?  
That's how you make me feel.  
("Coattrack" Kill the Man Who Questions)

This song by Kill the Man Who Questions replays the well-worn narrative of women being asked to hold a man's coat or belongings while they enter the pit or play on the stage. The woman is an object for the agency of the man. Therefore the women who refuse, the women who enter the pit or play on the stage are the strangers as they do not support agency and identity of the male figures. Punk, but anarcho-punk in particular, is often lauded for the roles women played within it, yet those roles serve more often than not to bolster the male and reinforce the authenticity of the subculture. The women, the people of colour and the LGBTQI+ individuals remain strangers within their own narratives.

I've lost counts of how many times I have gone to see bands play, see mates play and found myself surrounded by women holding coats or standing with fucking clothing draped over them while their fella goes off in the pit. When I enter the pit I am then either stared at, like I'm an oddity or I don't belong. Sometimes I even get pushed to the side (and I have seen that happen to other women too). It's kinda like because I have breasts I have transgressed some invisible boundary or something. (Rhiannon)

I despise this creeping attitude that if you are at a gig or whatever, even just sitting in a pub listening to whomever make a racket in the corner that you must be there because you are someone's girlfriend. You can't be there because you like the music or even there in your own right, you are a woman and so must belong to someone else. You are a thing not a person. (Natalie)

This approach to the stranger that women represent within punk not only removes their agency and reduces them to objects, but reinforces heteronormativity within

the subculture. They "must be someone's girlfriend" typically assumes the 'someone' to be male, rather than another female or a fluid or non-gendered person.<sup>1</sup> It also assumes that woman cannot themselves be asexual. In other words, while wanting to pat themselves on the back for the undoubted strides taken and boundaries broken, the very narrative in how it happened serves to reinscribe the very things that were being shattered. This is now resulted in the creation of Shiragirl stage at the Warped festival which simply reinforces that female bands need to be kept separate, and noted as 'special', from male fronted bands.

Warped tour is about as far from anarcho-punk as it is possible to get within punk, but it is often the first introduction to punk for many pre-pubescent or early teens so the messages it creates will spill into their further explorations in areas such as anarcho-punk. Shiragirl and similar enterprises carve out a specific space for women, telling them they are strangers in the male sphere – from there it seems little more than a hop, skip and a jump to place the same message onto people of colour or LGBTQI+ individuals. One is reminded of the speech made by Sojourner Truth, "Ain't I a woman" delivered to the 1851 Women's Convention in Ohio. In her speech she notes:

If my cup won't hold but a pint, and yours holds a quart, wouldn't you be mean not to let me have my little half measure-full?

Truth is referencing power asymmetry and noting that those in the most dominant position can afford to give those in lesser positions what little placates them or 'fills' them because it doesn't cost those in dominant positions or with access to much greater levels of power. Analogous is the approach of separate stages for female bands while simultaneously writing them out of official history accounts, events, exhibits or relegating them to a coat hanger. The likelihood of this occurring less within punk, and perhaps anarcho-punk in particular, in comparison with mainstream society does not let it off the hook for what does occur or is subtly reinforced through the making of women, people of colour and LGBTQI+ individuals into the stranger in the pit while simultaneously fetishizing them as an example of barriers broken, yet unbroken, in this historiography and memorializing of the narrative.

So how did women within anarcho-punk respond to this fetishized stranger role? Did they accept it? Reject it? Resist it? Or do they continue to struggle with / against it? The remainder of this chapter will use interview quotes with 23 female or female presenting individuals from Northern Ireland to explore this in relation to activism, especially that in regards to non-human animals.<sup>2</sup>

1. Edward Anthony Avery-Natale notes a similar approach to women in the Anarcho-Punk scene of Philadelphia in chapter 6 of his 2016 book – listed in the bibliography.

2. All interviews were conducted either in person or online over a two year period from 2014 – 2016, interviewees were given the choice of using their own name or a pseudonym, all selected their own name. They are aged between 35 and 53, with the majority being in their 40s. Information such as where they live in Northern Ireland and their job has been removed as the community is so small they could be easily identified. Interview quotes are deliberately not tidied up as I believe that the nature of articulation and inarticulation is important. All interviews have received a full transcript of their interview and seen how it is has been used in publications – including this one – and given their approval prior to final submission. These quotes are from interviews conducted for a broader project on marginalised voices within punk in relation to anarchism, activism and materiality.



**Toxic Waste (of experiences) ?**

I strongly believed, and still do, that until all forms of oppression are broken then none are. I include animals in that, so yeah animal's rights was something that a lot of us took on as a means of hitting back. We would organise groups – so much harder back then without mobiles and social media and all that – when we heard of a hunt happening and we would set out to sabotage it. We wanted to make sure that horses and dogs were safe as well as the foxes, so we planned it carefully. However we knew the land owners had brought in the police and that if they caught us they would give us a hiding at the very least. It was frightening standing there with your whistle, drawing attention to yourself, but it was the right choice. It was a choice made from principle you know, compassion and personal safety can't override or over-privilege that. (Fiona)

The group that Fiona is referring to was a small group of predominantly women who would gather to undertake hunt disruption (they preferred not to call it sabin, although Fiona can no longer remember why) during the latter part of the 1980s, disbanding in 1991 for a multitude of reasons. They would typically disrupt the hunt by distracting the animals, especially the dogs and the horses and then moving around as much as possible to try and ensure they were followed instead of the foxes, or whatever was being hunted. Fiona is very articulate in regards to making a conscious choice to do this knowing that it came at a cost of potential pain, danger or even imprisonment. The political situation of Northern Ireland during the 1980s and 90s sometimes bled into the experiences of activism for some of the women interviewed. For example, Triona recalls her experiences of a hunt sab that encountered a more extreme group of security.

We had managed to get into [anonymised] somehow; maybe someone cut a fence or something I can't remember. Anyway, we were all hiding, like behind trees and bushes you know, waiting to step out and make a racket. I have a vague memory of having a pot lid in my hand to bang on [laughs] I dunno [shrugs]. So anyway the waiting is horrible, you just want it to start. Then this guy comes up and says we gotta leave now. He starts yelling at us to move, run. So we did. Turns out that the grounds we were on were fed up of sabs every five minutes so they had somehow hired, I think it was the some of the UDA as 'security' [air quotes] for the one we was at. That coulda ended so differently if you think about it. (Triona)

The political climate at the time also meant that those partaking in activism ran the risk of being prosecuted under The Prevention of Terrorism Act which had been made law in 1974 to deal with paramilitary activity. By 1986 a unit within Special Branch (ARNI) had been created to deal specifically with what they termed 'animal rights extremism'. (ER1) None of those interviewed were prosecuted under this law for their activism, but the majority of them were aware during their activism that it existed and could be applied to them. Two interviewees specifically recalled

being threatened with it when they were arrested.

I don't want to exaggerate the situation as it was back then, it is easy to do that without meaning to when things are being read by people who didn't grow up here you know. Still we got lifted at a protest, there might also have been a sab as well but if there was I wasn't at it, I was at the protest against [anonymised] in North Down. So we got lifted, roughed up a bit getting shoved in the back of the van and taken to the cells in [anonymised] to sit for an hour or two. I was then dragged out and put in a room with two officers and my mum, who was terrified at having been dragged down there. They asked questions, but when I wouldn't answer they said I could be charged under the Terrorism Act and said they would leave me to think about it. My mum was crying by then, she was so afraid that I would be charged as a terrorist and she pleaded with me to just tell them whatever they wanted to hear. (Pat)

Fortunately I had been warned in advance that if we got lifted we could be threatened with the Terrorist Act, but that it was bullshit. When it did happen, I have never been so grateful to know that in advance, because to be in the same place where you think they also question bombers and murderers and to have your actions placed alongside theirs, it just made me fucking furious. What complete bollocks. Not right in the fucking head. (Katie)

Given the realities that these individuals were faced with why did they choose to become involved or remain active within animal activism in this context? Did they see their role within activism as a part of their attempts (variously understood) to resist traditional gender roles and attitudes? Helen Reddington rightly notes that "creating an all-female rock band was arguably a radical political act in itself." (Bull & Dines, 2014: 57) Therefore the combining of such an act with lyrics that explored themes of vegetarianism / veganism, animal 'rights' or treatment, feminism, queerness, state resistance, and revolution went a long way to prompting interviewees into moving from consumption to activism.

It opened my eyes, and ears, to whole new world. Not just of being but of thinking. I'm still blown away every time I hear it, takes me back to the first time. (Kim)

To be honest I starting reading anarchist philosophies, and I agreed with them but couldn't quite get there with making it coherent, making it all relate to my life. Then the music, oh the music, it brought it all together. I saw Toxic Waste, and others, and it made sense. It was all one giant picture and I could suddenly get it. (Nicola)

Yeah it was hard, it's all well and good someone like Penny saying 'No authority but yourself' but it wasn't until I went to the live shows that it started to make sense. It became a community for me so it did. I found out about squatting and working together and all that. For me, it took the music to come first then I was able to make it all work so I was. (Ruth)



Reddington notes that a sense of agency was vital for the development of the genre. (2014: 59) It could not simply be agency for one gender at the expense of others and yet seldom do we find accounts from the experiences of women beyond those of playing in bands, and while they are incredibly important, they are presented in such a way as to reinscribe the male dominated narrative, they are utilized to show how barriers were broken by punk. The inclusion of wider experiences, such as being promoted within this book as a whole, serve the underscore both length which punk in all its iterations still needs to go to promote true equality for women, people of colour and LGBTQI+ individuals, and the importance of the concept a wider, intersectional compassion that lies at the heart of much of what punk does.

For me animal liberation and animal rights are part of a bigger picture, achieving them is a key part to achieving human liberation. The two are deeply connected and so I am compelled to act on that. (Iona)

Anarchism, since its beginnings, has focused on a range of struggles, seeing them as intimately interconnected, bourgeois rule, patriarchy, heteronormativity, speciesism and race. Therefore we find classical anarchist thinkers such as Peter Kropotkin writing on economics at the heart of feudalism and capitalism, the use of scarcity of food to drive up prices, the importance of voluntary co-operation for a successful society and the creativity of species. Emma Goldman wrote on a wide range of topics including, but not limited to, capitalism, militarism, religion and atheism, marriage, homosexuality, rising anti-Semitism, and freedom of speech. Mikhail Bakunin wrote on class struggle, religion, anti-Semitism, violence and repeatedly against Marxism.

For those interviewed, the anarchism within their identity is about finding a solution or alternatives for multiple oppressions and recognising the intersectional nature of oppression rather than focusing on one as worse or more important than the others, as we can observe in the above quote from Iona's interview and in Marie's interview below.

I cannot abide oppression and injustice; I will seek to challenge them when I see them by whatever means necessary. I will call out people making sexist or racist jokes, comments or whatever. I will encourage my daughters to do whatever they want. I will rescue what animals I can and challenge anyone I see harming them. (Marie)

The very nature of this intersectionality lies in the nature of compassion which is more than an emotional response to the pain or suffering of others. Compassion takes the next step into activism through a desire to alleviate suffering and yet it seems to stop at a certain point, rather than continuing to push and break through boundaries in regards to women, people of colour and LGBTQI+. For example, while the women in these interview extracts are clear on their motivation for becoming involved in animal activism and intersectional concerns, they were less articulate or considered in their role within domesticity and how it related, if at all, to anarcho-punk as they understood it. This will be explored in the final section of this chapter.

### Another world is possible?

Anarcho-punk did involve a practical critique of the way things are, not just at the level of direct action but in the development of different ways of doing things such as creating alternatives to the commercial distribution of music. For many class struggle anarchists, the development of subversive relations between people was endlessly deferred until after the revolution. (Beasts of Burden, 1999: 3)

In 1971-72, the sectarian fighting in parts of Northern Ireland led to widespread homelessness and population movement. Families were forced from areas because they were not Catholic or Protestant and relocated to other areas. In the time in between the two they were often homeless and forced to squat an empty property. In January 1977, there were 6,168 squats in property belonging to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. There are likely to have been a lot more in privately owned properties, but no figures exist for them. However then, as now, housing was strictly controlled by our "community defence organisations" whose main objective was to make sure that the right sort of people were living in the right sort of area. This was the situation under which those who were squatting for either political or personal reasons, including anarcho-punks, had to carve out their own space within Northern Ireland. Squatting is illegal in Northern Ireland, punishable by a three month prison sentence and a fine (which increases for each subsequent offence). However the political reality and the conflict have meant that prison space is scarce and so that punitive response is seldom, if ever, handed down.

The house was an end of terrace building with an illegally, and not even remotely safe, loft conversion. It was not a sound place, likely the last rites shoulda been said on it years back. But it was home for us. A few auld mattresses and blankets which I got of my ma and a few cups 'n' plates and a kettle and that's about it I think. Oh yeah and the boom box, there was absolutely nil point in living without punk music. It had no electric lights most of the time and it smelt bad. I swear something had died in there and been buried under the rubbish. But it was home, my first home away from my ma's house. (Jen)

Like many anarcho-punks on mainland Britain and in other parts of Europe, the reasons for squatting were varied, but often understood as political protest in action. Typically this was expressed through a protest against the lack of social housing available, the divisive language and attitude towards poverty that was articulated by Margaret Thatcher and a lack of affordable private rental properties. Also like many other accounts the anarcho-punks squatting in Northern Ireland dealt with homes in various states of repair or disrepair. Although unlike the rest, they also sometimes had to deal with properties that had bomb damage to them, and in the case of one interviewee a hidden stash of weapons from a paramilitary group which led the interviewee and her friends to vacate the property immediately!

The building had been badly damaged, both by a car bomb from presumably months back, but we never knew, and from spides using



it to drink in and god knows what else.<sup>3</sup> It was minging from whatever mould was growing there, and there was an over-riding smell of piss throughout the whole building. There was excrement in the sinks and puke in the bath. So began a frenzy of cleaning, fuse obtaining, window barricading, plumbing, cooking, painting, and moving out rubbish. We painted the walls, found or appropriated books, furniture, and at one point, somehow, a working printer. We all had our own bedrooms, which were a luxury, but we all spent most of our time together in the communal areas. We became a little centre of activism and would print up little booklets about animal mistreatment, activism, and flyers for sabs and so on. People would meet at ours to head out for gigs, sabs, protests and what have you. Cracking times, I miss them sometimes now but I wouldn't like my children living in one if I'm honest. (Marie)

Interviewees were asked about who took on various domestic roles within the squats they had, or did, inhabit. Specifically, who cleaned, cooked, looked after children (if there were any) and so on. They were also asked who took on the roles of organising any activism, printing flyers, bringing in bands or even playing in the squat (if that was viable). Of the 17 out of 23 interviews that had lived at some point in a squat, only 11 were able to make any specific recall of the details. 9 of the 11 noted that it was traditional roles that were adhered to with women undertaking care based roles and the men undertaking the more active roles within the wider punk milieu.

A lot of time was spent talking; there were so many ideas and so much enthusiasm. Most people felt strongly that the point of the squat should be to provide a space that people could use to do whatever they felt was punk for them. Mostly though, we were our own kind of family and ultimately fell into quite traditional roles within that. Myself, Jenny and Aoife did the cooking – vegan of course – and cleaning, after the initial decoration of the place. Mick and Paul did take on doing any repairs, but let's be honest, they would have been better not! [Laughs] Oh there was another guy who moved in after Paul and I split up and he moved out. I've forgotten his name, but I do recall he was really into animal rights and spend ages hand making flyers and those wee booklets about anarchism and animals which I think he sold or gave away at gigs. (Sarah)

Never actually thought about it to be honest, till you asked, but yeah it was the women who mostly did the cooking – although gotta be honest, I don't remember much, if any, cleaning being done by anyone. I was heavily involved in animal rights stuff and was a vegan so I would cook up huge pots of lentils and beans. Peter and Sam would bring their mates back after gigs or bring touring bands back to crash and we would all sit up night gabbing away and stuffing our bakes with the lentils. I liked it less the next day when I had to wash all the dishes

3. A spide is a local slang term for youths who affect an uneducated, unemployable, faux-benefits class demeanour. In Scotland they are known as NEDS (non-educated delinquents) and in England as Chavs or scallys.

encrusted with the now hardened on lentils while they all snored around me. (Brigid)

Both these interviews above are indicative of the roles undertaken in squats amongst interviewees. Whilst they women were challenging the misuse of animals, protesting various forms of oppression, understanding oppression in a broadly intersectional way and breaking boundaries in relation to gender equality, they are still living out traditional gender roles in their communal homes. It is difficult to break normalised expectations despite the various attempts at egalitarianism within the anarcho squats.

Rebecca Binns notes her own growing discomfort with some of the messages that were being inscribed within some of the squats in relation to women, especially when children were born (in Bull & Dines, 2014: 104 – 113). She notes how important it grew to be for her that others knew she had a 'legitimate' job and when her own son was born to have a more secure living environment for him.

I found myself pregnant while I was living in a squat up [anonymised] with some friends. We had long conversations into the night about what would be best for the baby. As much as I wanted to continue this living out of what I thought of as my anarchist ideals and beliefs, I was aware that we all lived precariously. We could be kicked out anytime; doesn't a child deserve more security than that? We couldn't always guarantee 3 meals a day, kids can't go hungry. The final nail in the coffin for me though was when a couple of guys asked to move in and we said there was no room at the time but there would be when I got closer to my due date and moved out. They says back to us oh never mind then, if youse are not gonna be here, it's not worth it. We were all confused by that so they said, they reckoned that living in a squat with a baby was better because they had found that they were guaranteed to always have food and their clothes cleaned, cause we'd do it naturally for the baby. Asses didn't touch ground after that comment! Bastards. I was done at that point to be honest. I had spent years with these people, fighting for various oppressions to be stopped. I had actually had my hand broken on a hunt sab with one of them and yet here they were looking to exploit my gender for their own benefit and just showing how little we had really come within anarcho-punk for women. (Fiona)

Fiona's experiences speak to how much distance exists between the perceived barrier breaking of punk and its reality for women (and people of colour and LGBTQI+ individuals). This chapter began with Sara Ahmed's stranger theory and used it to explore the experience of women within anarcho-punk as simultaneously present and the stranger whose purpose in the narrative and recounting of the subcultures history is to reinforce the white, male agent at the cost of the female subject. It explored how activism within animal rights did not change or seem to influence the domestic experiences undertaken within squatting. Punk has come a long way in how it treats women, people of colour and LGBTQI+ individuals, but it has an even longer way to still travel.



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**DON'T SUBMIT.** The government try to pull the wool over your eyes/they don't suspect we see through their lies schemes/that we all realise/they try to pretend that it's gonna be fine/well,that's all total shit/we'll get blown up in time/chorus-don't submit,subvert/don't submit,subvert/we don't care what the system says/we're gonna be free for the rest of our days. parliament can argue when we say that we're free/but it's not us were who're fooled by their plastic democracy/they talk and smile through holes in their arses/but we get closer to a nuclear war as each day passes/chorus/don't sit around and abide your time quietly each day/'cos anarchy and freedom is coming your way.

**POLITICAL CARNAGE.** 1984/knocking on your door/you don't care/you don't give a fuck/it's alright for you/you've got the power/the power/to let us die/the queen is just a pawn in a nugs game/used, twisted round your finger/a puppet on a string on Maggie Thatchers hand/corrupted by the government/so they can rule this land/chorus-conditioned from the day we're born to the day we die/political carnage/political carnage/political carnage/political carnage/political carnage/political carnage/political carnage/political carnage. don't fight among yourselves/fight suppression/don't vent your anger on your fellow man/fight political oppression/chorus.

**WAR IS A PART OF THE SYSTEM.** The dead bodies on the battle field/prove Thatcher would use our flesh as a shield/and Brixton's riot was a result of the hate/towards this system we help to create/will we always have the threat of war? /will we always have an open sore? /war is a part of the system/war is a part of the system/people die in police custody/but who pays for the police force? /you and me/and if they ever drop the bomb/the ones who caused it to be dropped/will be alive...and we'll be gone.

**YOU CAN'T FOOL ME.** What's the use of standing here/when there's things in the world to do/the government think they can fool you/that they can tell you what to do/well,they've got another thing coming when the people rise and fight/'cos anarchy,peace and freedom is gonna happen over the top/chorus-well,you can't fool me/deceive me with your schemes/and you don't think that we realise/they're just your power greedy dreams. who do they think they're fooling? /they think they're fooling you/so they blame life on society/and that's the best that they can do/chorus/the people talk of rebelling/but you know they never will/Thatcher abolishes this and that/but when will she start to kill?

**PASSIVE-FIST.** Well,i've had enough of being pushed around and screwed into the floor/gonna pack my bags,brab my coat and run right out the door/just 'cos i'm a pacifist don't mean i'll take abuse/I ain't no wooden puppet to be put to your'own use/oh,you can point the finger and tell me who I am/yea,you can point the finger but I couldn't give a damn/don't think i'm a punch-bag for you to push around and shove/I don't want your arrogance,right now i've had enough/so you can stuff your cheap heroics/i'm a pacifist/i'm a pacifist/i'm a pacifist/yea,i'm a passive-fist....right?







## - SHOOTING DOWN THE CIRCUS CLOWN -

- a press release to coincide with 'Never Mind The Jubilee'  
from Crass' drummer and lyricist, Penny Rimbaud -

So the circus comes to town and the rock'n'roll jokers (swindlers) chuckle over cheap Chilean plonk, celebrating a campaign that was never theirs, but which the media continues to give them credit for. The Pistols, The Clash, The Damned and all the rest of what we are informed were the 'real punks' were about as radical as a British Rail sandwich, all plastic wrap and no content. True; the 'real punks' never made any great claims to a political seriousness, yet theirs, so the media tells us, was the 'movement' that twenty five years on explains why the NFT should now choose to hold a punk event.

So what did any of those 'real punks' do then that now warrants a resurgence of interest? Beyond a contribution to the rock'n'roll industry comparable with that of Donovan's or perhaps Gerry of the Pacemakers, why are they remembered at all? Sub-Dury rock'n'roll? Fashionably shoddy Westwood outfits? Playschool rebellion? I think not. The answer is simple; they are remembered solely because there followed in their wake a genuine movement of genuine people to whom 'Anarchy in the UK' wasn't simply a Tin Pan Alley catch phrase. The movement inspired by bands like Crass, Poison Girls and Conflict sought to create radical social and personal change founded on established (yet then unfashionable) principles of anarchism, pacifism, feminism and vegetarianism: it was they who ensured that punk and anarchy became seen as synonymous. 'Get pissed, destroy'? Nice try, boys, but no, the 'real punks' merely reflected the nihilistic self-interests of the media that so lauded them; the servant best serves the master who best serves the servant.

In last week's Sun, alongside the predictable tits, bums and social illiteracy, Johnny Rotten spoke out from the comfort of 'one of London's most expensive hotels'.

*"I said this thirty years ago, the only true anarchists in Britain are the football hooligans. They're the only ones that actually do something."*

Maybe from the luxury of his Los Angeles home, Rotten hasn't heard of the anti-globalisation movement, or the Animal Liberation Front, or of Reclaim the Streets or indeed any of the manifestations of genuine anarchic thought (and action) spawned by Crass and like-minded bands and people. But why should Rotten talk sense? Where's the profit to be made from that when the only reason he's over here is to relaunch 'God Save the Queen', an attack on a monarchy about which he says *"I don't mind the idea of a monarchy at all. It's actually helpful, it is a tourist trap, it can earn money."* Which, of course, better defines Rotten's position than just about anything else he's ever publicly stated; it's all a matter of dosh, but then if that scam fails he can always turn to his 'real estate'.

The first wave of punk, the 'real punk', the one to which (with a few notable exceptions) the media almost exclusively confines its interest, was a fake from the outset, fun maybe, but still a fake; not so much egg in the face of society as puffed-up egos strutting the circus boards. *'I'm so bored with the USA? Then why snort coke in the beast's belly? 'I am an anarchist'? Then why not act like one rather than like a capitalist goon?*

In an ill-conceived attempt to get Crass onto his books, the manager of Sham 69 (and later Boy George), once informed us without a hint of irony that he could 'market revolution', by which he of course meant that he saw us and our message of personal autonomy as a commodity. We told him in no uncertain terms that we were not amused by his pig-ignorance. It is that willing acceptance of commodification which should exclude the Pistols, The Clash, The Damned and their like from any serious discussion on the subject of the 'movement' for which punk is remembered. If however it's simply a cosy trip down memory lane that we're looking for, let's forget the very serious issues of a world choking from American moral and military terrorism and have a giggle and a snigger with the 'real punks'. But remember, *'you're either for us or against us'*.

Punk became a force for change to which its unwitting and witless founding fathers made no contribution whatsoever. A handful of second-rate shock'n'roll records does not a revolution make, but look no further than Seattle and Genoa to see that a sincere and informed attack on the status quo could. In a rampantly capitalist society dominated by the sickeningly Orwellian spin of Big Brother Bush and his arse-licking paramour, Tony Blair, it comes as no great surprise that the commerce-driven 'real punks' are the only ones allotted a space in the history books; *'ignorance is'* after all, *'strength'*. In challenging that ignorance Crass inspired what was perhaps one of the most powerful cultural movements of the late twentieth century, the radical substance of which is as alive today as it was then. In the wake of the jingoistic clap-trap inspired by the WTC, Crass' anti-war messages are as pointed now as they were prophetic twenty-five years ago; is it any wonder then that they have been so studiously ignored by the mainstream?

Just as Crass refused to be bought out a quarter of a century ago, so they do today. Their involvement in 'Never Mind the Jubilee' has been undertaken in the sincere hope that they might yet put the record straight. Their show on June 15 will not be celebration of nostalgia, nor will it be a shallow act of self-promotion. Their message has always been clear, *'there is no authority but yourself'*. Their involvement in the NFT's presentation will set out to further prove that point.

(Penny Rimbaud is available for interviews & further information on 01992 52 3854)

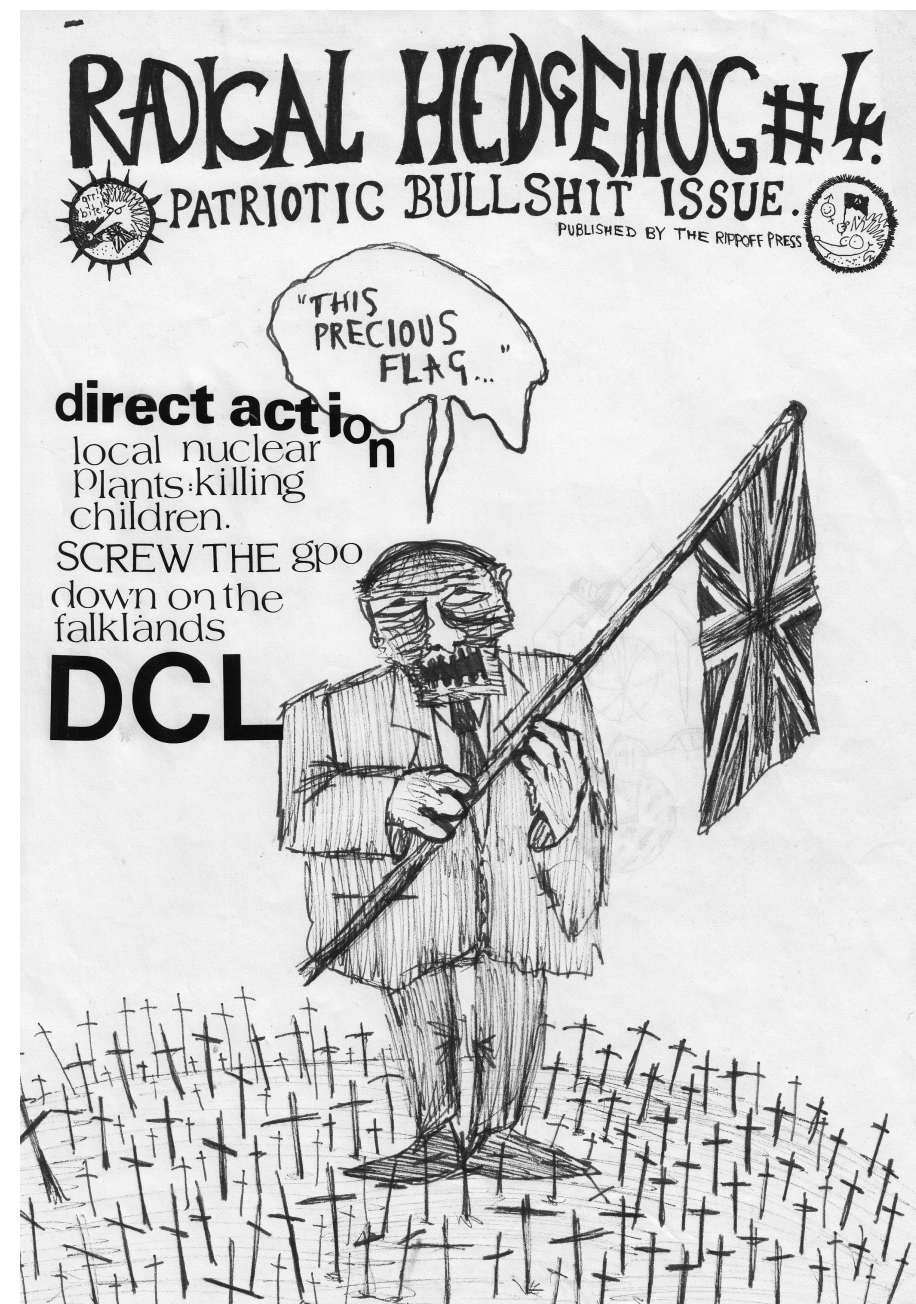






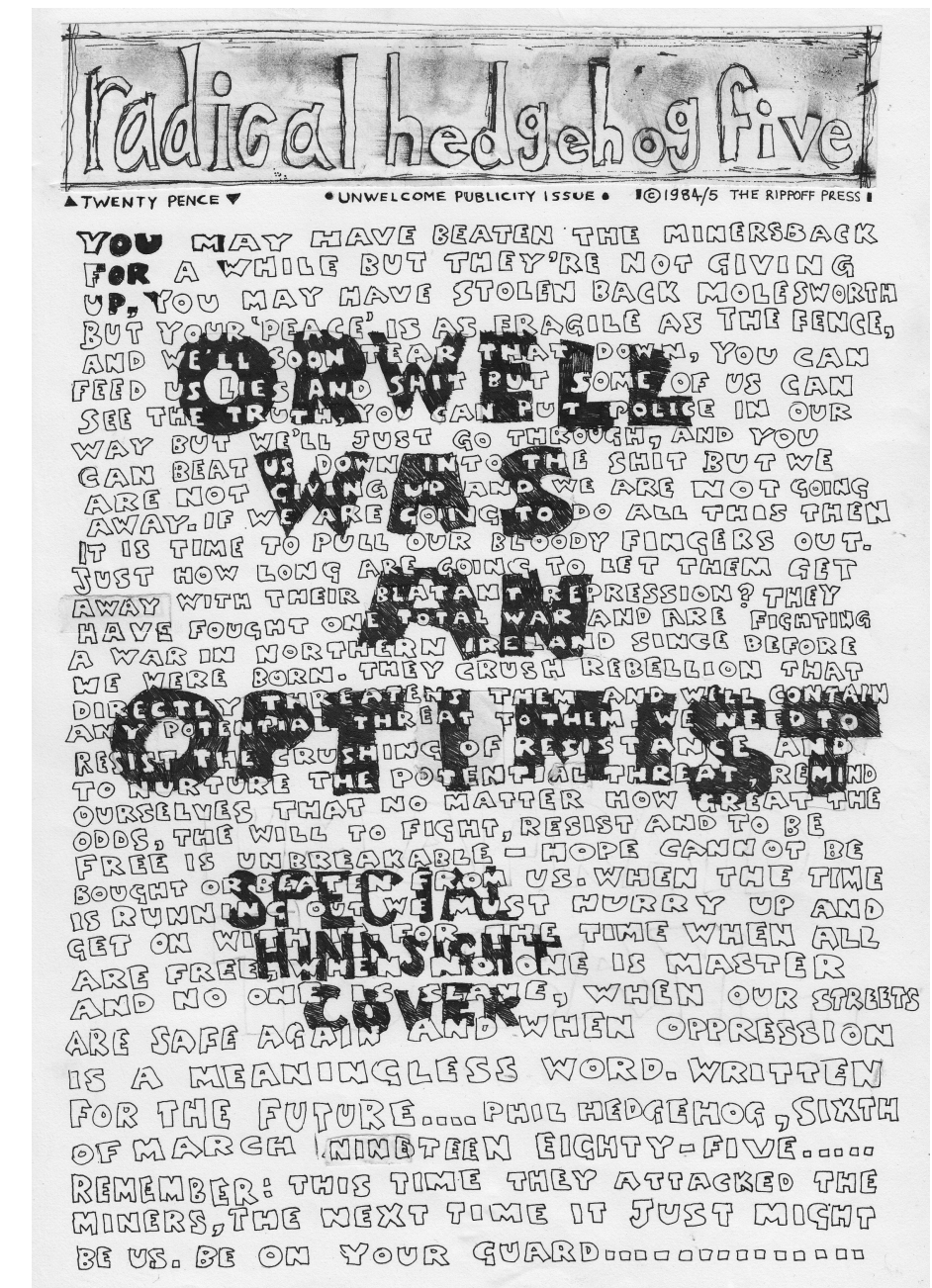


to 'change the world' (as only a seventeen year old can) I decide to make *Radical Hedgehog* a full-on 'Revolutionary' publication. Dump the comic strip (a decision that made Steve Ignorant a bit non-plussed when buying issue #4 off me in Exeter St. George's Hall and immediately flicking through to find it to find the cupboard was bare. "Where's the comic strip gone?" "Oh, I dropped that. I didn't think people were taking me seriously". Which does make me sound slightly pompous), dump the band features (apart from coverage of The Very Things and the whole DCL project, because I thought and still do, that they were Ace) and concentrate on (dramatic chord) 'Serious Politics'.



Step back a bit. For those who weren't around in the early 1980s, communication was a bit of a chore. No Facebook, Twitter or Internet. No Laptops, PCs or, for the grand majority of the Population of Planet Earth, no mobile phones. The GPO landline telephone was an expensive outlay for the average household. If you, as a

young Anarcho-Punk, wanted to call someone you had the choice between; using the 'Family Phone' (if such a thing existed) and getting your Dad to wander into the hallway after 10 minutes with a small GPO pamphlet of how long such a phone call would cost and holding it right under your nose; or nipping out in the pissing rain with a pocket full of ten pence pieces to the local Red Telephone Box where recent evacuates of the local pub had used it for a temporary latrine to call up your mate.



Not too good is it? So the only viable and reliable way of communicating is through the Victorian British invention of the letter post. Letters, leaflets, fanzines, posters, cassettes and various other documents travel the length and breadth of the British Isles and beyond thanks to a small lick of sticky romanticised image of the current Monarch plastered on it. And let's face it; it was vital at the time. Everyone involved in the Anarcho-Punk world was poor. Dirt Poor. Living off Supplementary Benefit, Pocket Money, Crass Records Bullshit Detector royalties or hand-outs from friends



and/or family. There used to be two posts (deliveries) back then, First Class that guaranteed your letter would arrive the next day, first thing at 8 or 9 am. So you could brush the Sugar Puffs dust off your mail, or Second post, which would arrive at 10-11 am and you could greet it as you came home from school, work or giving small children 'Jim'll Fix It' badges. And then there was Second Class post, where the Rail workers would just park a Post Van in a siding and see how long it would sit there before anyone noticed.

So, because we were so destitute and we couldn't light signal bonfires to the next village or send a Mongol Horseman runner to the next town we were rather limited. Then, and we're not sure who, some genius came up with the idea of 'Soaping Stamps'. To this day, I'm not sure who gave me this information. It must have been in a letter some time from someone, but it seemed to spread throughout the 'scene' by osmosis.

Let me explain. You buy a stamp. You stick it on your envelope. You post it into a box. The first thing that happens is that it is 'Franked' with a Franking mark. Now this could be an old Postmistress with a rubber stamp, but back then it's some huge clacketty electro-mechanical franking machine that marks the stamp on the side (usually) to say a) this is a used stamp and b) this is where it came from. There's also a huge problem with under the address, printed phosphor dots that related to the Postcode they used to use in about 1985 made recycled envelopes turn up in Ipswich when they were meant for Aberdeen.

Anyway, the genius (I hope he wasn't some Californian MIT bloke, just some bloke in his bedroom realising that Discharge were one-trick ponies) goes: "Hang about. The Chemical composition of the stamp paper is quite stable, and Stamp Ink is quite unstable, therefore, a wax or wax-like covering could be introduced quite subtly. This would enable an introduction of another medium, introduced quite thinly into an electro-mechanical process that had no means of detecting interference, readable". Meaning that: The Franking Mark would be readable to the scanner but would still be unstable. Therefore the lovely letter that told you that Stig from Hartlepool's letter (that told you about his deep love of Anti-Sect) had a stamp on it that could be, ahem, 'Re-Cycled'.

All it took was three or four brisk strokes of a quality eraser (I used the Rotring B20 or the Staedtler Noris-Plastic) and Voila! The franking ink vanished and you could use the envelope again (with a sticker over the address natch). To me this was a revelation; suddenly you could have free communication between friends, bands and yes, even Stig in Hartlepool. It quickly caught on within the Anarcho-Punk letters scene and soon it seemed in those heady days of the early 1980s everyone was at it. Although some people didn't get the point and just used to stick sellotape (other brands of sticky tape are available) over their stamps (even though in the original Radical Hedgehog article I did advocate that method). Which did lead to a lot of pointless examination about how stamps are manufactured and how many layers go into the process. Also, it marks a peak of soap in the history of Punk Rock. Originally so important in how you spike your hair (Imperial Leather was the best) but now it was funding subversion! (Yeah, Imperial Leather was good for soaping

stamps but it was angular and could cause scratches. Lux bars on the other hand were smooth and high quality). As an aside, don't try this today in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century as postage stamps are now multi-layered and booby-trapped. Besides, you're all using the internet.

Stirred up by this liberation of communication, I thought, "*Hang on, the whole world (or at least the Stigs) should have this arcane knowledge and write freely unto other fidgety gits in bedrooms all over the country*". So I decided to put that info into Radical Hedgehog. My first attempt, in Issue 2, I chickened out of. It appears on the cover but under a headline that says "*How to cut your Postage Bills: If you're not really rich*" it says "*Withdrawn*". Maybe because I had some sense. But by Issue 4, "*The Patriotic Bullshit Issue*" it says on the cover "*Screw The GPO*". And inside a delightfully illustrated guide on how to commit postal fraud.

And of course this is where I become recklessly brave. I'm only producing about 50-100 copies of each issue so I get the bizarre idea of 'Publicity'. I send a copy to the local free ad-sheet *The Forest Advertiser* (which is still running today actually, as opposed to a lot of local newspapers) with a letter that says to its Editor Tom Price, "*There you go, maybe you won't be some alcoholic old hack who writes about sheep shit your entire career*". Whoops. I always do that. Anyway, let my diary take up the story (one for the kids there, you know, diaries? They're a bit like Blogs but you keep them to yourself):

Tuesday July 3 1984. "*Radical Hedgehog #4 is OUT! Printed for nothing (because it's being photocopied by a mate of my Dad's at Rank Xerox in Mitcheldean. Take that corporate Capitalism!) and should cost 10p or anything.*"

Wednesday July 4 1984. For some reason my diary entry starts with, "*Who is Captain Kirk?*" then goes into "*stapling up RH#4*".

Friday July 6 1984. My mate Anj buys 3 copies but her Mum has 7. Funny that.

But of course, in this period I was hitching up and down the country, taking part in actions like Leeds Stop The City, going to see what became Crass' last gig in Aberdare etc. so I was completely ignorant of what was about to happen.

Tuesday August 14 1984. The Editor of *The Forest Review* (still available at all good recycling bins in the Forest of Dean by the way) Tom Price, phones my house. Obviously a bit narked by my letter, he introduces himself as, "*The alcoholic old hack who writes about sheep shit his entire life*". Blimey. Anyway, we have a lovely discussion about Forest of Dean notaries, including a recently deceased woman who was a Quaker who described herself as an Anarchist (I'll have to research her) and ended up with him saying, "*We will have to go to town on you, you know?*" I think I said, "*Yep*". I thought it was going to be "Punk Nutter Has Own Magazine in Forest", sort of thing.

Wednesday August 15 1984. My Diary: (The bits in quotes are me talking now) "*The Forest Review article came out today-Front page! Wow! I'm that exciting (Heavy Irony there). Mum was a bit upset at first (she burst into fucking tears) but when I explained it was pure bullshit she cheered up a bit*".



No, the Forest Review article was the front page and said “Police Study Stamp Fiddle”. Nothing much about Punk Rock, Anarcho-Punk or Anarchism. Yours truly was a Fraudster. Although, as you can see from the reproduced article, it was quite the gentle mauling. In that I mean, Mr Price didn’t have any ‘Shock Horror’ stories to write. He really did have to spend all his time writing stories about people complaining that sheep were coming into Cinderford and crapping everywhere. So, it wasn’t a Daily Mail, “Evil Punk Anarchist Slags Off The Forest” expose, more a, “Look What This Bloke’s Done With His Life” headline.

Thursday September 6 1984. It took a while to find the exact date as my Teenage self wouldn’t talk about it in his diary (it just says “A Boring Day” with a skull and crossbones on it) as he thought the forces of the State were coming to get him, blissfully unaware that the forces of the state were in his front room with the requisite attempted moustache, the Burton’s suit and comfy shoes. So, teatime in a living room in the Forest of Dean that just happens to annex onto a Gun Shop. Yes, should bring a bit of colour to the story, I lived above a Gun Shop. We had them in the 1980s, and my old man ran one. Sure, I’d grown up with firearms as only people in, say, Kansas had. My old Man cleaning a .357 Magnum on the coffee table years before he had the shop whilst me and me Sister hid behind the sofa watching Doctor Who. I still think I’m one of the few ex-members of the post-Korean War members of the Peace News collective who could field-strip a Bren Gun. That’s probably why this copper (as I thought) was so interested in a local fanzine.

So, I came home from gallivanting around the country to find my Dad and this Detective sitting in the front room. To big up my Dad, for all our political differences, he was superb. Just motioned to me to keep schtum during leading questions and interrupted if it got ‘compromising’. Anyway, the copper, in his blue Burton’s suit, introduced himself as coming down from Cheltenham. That immediately got my hackles up as I thought, “Hang on, Coleford and Cinderford (towns in the Forest of Dean. It’s quite nice there. Please visit) has a CID, so has Gloucester. Hang on, I thought, Cheltenham is GCHQ central, this bloke’s Special Branch. So, tight lipped (But not as tight lipped of sphincter as I was) he asked me, as he pulled RH#4 out of a cardboard folder, “where did this get printed?”(I look at Dad, he just shakes his head quickly, I say) “I’m not prepared to say”. “Oh”.

And eventually, after an entertaining afternoon that must have lasted 30 minutes he fucked off. However, the subtext of this ‘interview with coffee’ as it were was, “You do realise that what you’ve published here is advocating a Criminal act of Fraud, we’re too busy to press charges on such a little tool as you and we’ll be keeping an eye on you me Laddo”. Leaving me with the surprising afterword, “Well, I look forward to seeing you contribute to Private Eye”.

And that’s about it really. There were no more visits from the Police, there was no fallout within the family about it, some local drunk shouted “Phil Hedgehog!!” at me in a pub toilet the week after and I went on my merry way doing pretty much what I’d been doing the rest of the year. Of course this was the unfazed reaction of a teenager who just files a visit to his home by Special Branch as “One of those

things”. If it happened to the 50 year old knacker writing this, I’d be growing a moustache, changing my name to Raoul and moving to Costa Rica.

However, I think it’s important to get this into print. Mainly to point out how important the whole ‘Soapy Stamps’ thing was, I mean, up to now its only historical recording is in Boff (Chumbawamba) Whalley’s autobiography *Footnotes* (Pomona Books. 2003. ISBN I-904590-00-4. Page 135). In that book the whole network of people trying to use what limited means of free information is, in my opinion, is dismissed in a rather tart way. Admittedly he’s talking about a rather sour dogmatism that was entering Anarcho-Punk circles at the time, but it does seem somewhat sour and bitchy in retrospect.

In conclusion then what have we learnt? That people in a corner find ingenious ways of getting their message out and if they’re young and/or desperate, don’t give a flying one about the consequences. What did I learn? It’s all up for grabs, don’t be scared, because if you brazen it out you can get away with anything. Goodnight.





NO SURVIVORS IN W.W.III

# Noise Addicts AntiLibel

ANTI-WAR

WHO  
the Hell  
HAS GOT  
A  
Licence To Kill?

DONT LET  
THEM USE  
YOU

WHEN WILL ALL  
OUR LIVES BE FREE?



IM  
NOT  
WAITING  
FOR  
WORLD  
WAR  
III

POWER DIVIDE THEIR WEALTH  
DESTROY THEIR



DONT  
VOTE

FOR INFORMATION: ANTISECT 21 DEE WALK  
GRANGE DAVENTRY NORTHANTS

I want my  
future to belong  
to me

ANTI-  
RESTRICTIONS

ALIENATE ALL AUTHORITY

ANTI-WAR

# Noise Addicts AntiLibel

ANTI-  
RESTRICTIONS

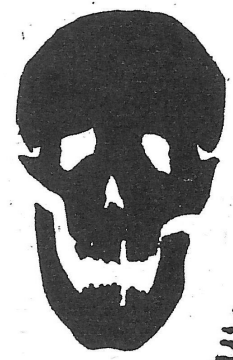
Life is  
Your MOST  
VALUABLE POS-  
SESSION. don't Let  
them SQUANDer it.

FOR INFORMATION: ANTISECT 21 DEE WALK  
GRANGE DAVENTRY NORTHANTS

WHAT GIVES THEM  
RIGHT TO  
THE  
DECIDE MY FUTURE

WE MUST DESTROY THE THREAT OF WAR

Don't be a  
prisoner of  
your own  
society



DONT  
VOTE

WAR IS A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

DONT BE AFRAID TO SAY NO!



# AMEBIX



• AMEBIX FORMED IN SUMMER 1978 AS 'THE BAND WITH NO NAME' AND RECORDED A 6 TRACK CASSETTE (DELETED) WHICH WE SOLD 4 COPIES OF. THE TRACK 'UNIVERSITY CHALLENGED' WAS USED ON THE COMPILATION ALBUM 'BULLSHIT DETECTOR 1'. WE PLAYED A LOT IN THE SOUTH DEVON AREA AND WENT THROUGH A NUMBER OF LINEUP CHANGES, INCLUDING A DRUMMER CALLED MARTIN WHO LET ME AND STIG LIVE WITH HIM IN A MANOR HOUSE IN THE MIDDLE OF DARTMOOR. HIS PARENTS CAME BACK AND FOUND OUT THAT WE HAD LIVED THERE, HENCE MARTIN WAS SENT TO A CLINIC IN HARLEY STREET, LONDON WHERE HE WAS DE-LOUSED AND GIVEN MEDICATION TO MAKE HIM NORMAL AGAIN. ME AND STIG THEN RECRUITED NORMAN TO PLAY SYNTH FOR US AND DECIDED TO MOVE TO THE BIG CITY OF BRISTOL IN 1981 WHERE WE WERE RIPPED OFF BECAUSE WE WERE JUST COUNTRY BUMPKINS. WE MET UP WITH DISORDER AND VIRUS (THEIR DRUMMER) JOINED US, TO LEAVE DISORDER PERMANENTLY IN 1983 TO PLAY FOR US FULL-TIME.

# AMEBIX



WE SOON GOT A DEAL WITH SPIDERLEG RECORDS WITH WHOM WE RELEASED THE "WHO'S THE ENEMY" E.P., "WINTER" 7" AND "NO SANCTUARY" 12" E.P., NONE OF THEM BEING PARTICULARLY OUTSTANDING, MOST OF THEM BADLY PRODUCED DUE TO A VERY LOW BUDGET. WE ACQUIRED JENGHIZ THE MAD SCOTSMAN TO PLAY SYNTH FOR US ON "NO SANCTUARY" BUT HE LEFT US TO TOUR ITALY AS A THREE PIECE WHERE WE DID VERY WELL (THANK YOU VERY MUCH) ON RETURNING TO ENGLAND WE MOVED TO RADSTOCK AND IN NOVEMBER '84 SET OFF TO TOUR HOLLAND (WELL, 4 DATES!) EXCEPTIONAL! AND WHEN WE GOT BACK WE HAD TO GET RID OF VIRUS DUE TO HIS LETHARGY AT THE TIME. WE PROCURED A NEW SYNTH PLAYER, GEORGE THE DRAGON JUST BEFORE HOLLAND TOO. A DEAL WAS ARRANGED WITH ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES SO WE HAD A COUPLE OF WEEKS TO FIND A NEW DRUMMER. SPIDER PRESENTED HIMSELF, SO WE PRESENTED HIM WITH A PRACTICE TAPE AND 3 PRACTICES BEFORE WE HAD TO GO INTO THE STUDIO. NOT ONLY DID HE MANAGE TO LEARN THE SONGS, BUT HE ALSO HELPED TO COMPLETELY RE-WRITE TWO OF THEM. THE ALBUM 'ARISE' IS THE FIRST AMEBIX RECORD THAT WE ARE ACTUALLY PLEASED WITH, SO BUY IT! WE ARE WORKING ON NEW MATERIAL AND VARIOUS TOURS AT PRESENT SO SEE YOU AT THE 4K. THE PRESENT LINEUP IS:

STIGUS MAXIMUS - GUITAR + BACKING VOX      SPIDER - DRUMS  
THE BARN ROCKIN VON APHID - BASS + VOX      GEORGE THE DRAGON - SYNTH



THAN A PIVOT

AMERICA



1/2





## STOPPING THE CITY – A MICRO MEMORY

Stephen Spencer-Fleet / Fleaty

Some snatches from scribbles in diaries and fag packets from 1983.

We knew what we were doing.

We were sick of the fucking war machine.

Sick of the City brokering death.

The time for action was now.

We would take to the streets and occupy the square mile.

That's what we thought.

'Smash the windows and glue up the locks of banks and butchers and all that fucks'-  
Disturbance From Fear.

'Amphetamines for breakfast

The order of the day.

No sleep

Only alcohol

And some class A's'

Graffiti from Rosebery Avenue Peace Centre. 1983.

Inside a sleeping bag on the small stage at Rosebery Avenue Peace Centre in Islington.

It was 1983 and after months of preparation and organisation Stop The City was about to kick off.

Getting to the Peace Centre, scoring, meeting zine mates, gig mates, party mates and an impromptu planning meeting for a ridiculously early start at St. Pauls for the purposes of insurrection were being fused with our party atmosphere.

Operation Brain Death.

Bands finished at midnight -ish so we gathered up our belongings and camped on the stage.

Steve from Cornwall, who I viewed as predatory, tried to sexually molest me twice in the night.

After surviving that we were shitting ourselves as a mob of boneheads tried to kick in the fire doors leading into the gig hall and stage.

These were the same group of Boneheads you had to run the gauntlet against each time you stepped out of Bank or Angel tube.



We could hear the disembodied cries of *'Fucking punk cunts', 'Wanna play smellies'* etc etc etc

They seemed to lose interest after 20 minutes or so and the noise of shouting and breaking bottles faded away slowly...

Relief passed over but not for long...

We heard screams and shouts and the sound of heavy footfall coming down the stairs.

We were greeted by the SPG, apparently looking for the Angry Brigade.

They had 'significant information' that an attack on the city of London was being planned for the following morning...

You don't say.

... *'We here for the gig mate'* I say..

*'Inspector to you cunt'* says Officer Friendly

*'How about Sir? Will that do?'*

I didn't expect to be punched...

Winded and doubled over provided an opportunity for another attempted grope

by Steve.

*'Fuck off Steve'*

*'What did you say?'* said one of the cops

Two cops and me stand in the corner.

Eyeballing.

After being searched and possessions strewn across the floor the cops lost interest in us.

*'Fucking little kids,'* I heard.

I was 17.

The boiler suited, unmarked, un-numbered cops moved upstairs.

We stayed on the stage feeling bewildered ...

4.10am *'Spliff?'* I heard someone say.

Fuck it why not I thought.

Where's the whizz?

Early breakfast.

5am Joined a mob upstairs for march on City.

Police were waiting for us.

We kept on walking as there was no attempt by them to stop us only photograph us.

6am we reached St Paul's

Whatever coordination there was fell into disarray almost immediately.

People running in all directions, warbling Native American call signs.

I stopped for a speedy fuel stop.

Half a gram up the nose and a couple of mints from my friend and artist Spence to take the taste away.

An hour later I discovered the mints were laxatives...

8.15am Another friend of mine decides to sit in the road, hold up the traffic and refuse to move.

He lasted less than 15 mins as he was swiftly arrested and taken to Bow Street for 'processing'.

9am Watched a Rolls Royce getting turned over. Thrilling, smashing of glass, compressing steel as the car inverts, wheels spinning slowly.

A group of us stand and look at the spectacle, entranced.

The spell is broken by police whistles and the sound of horses hooves.

We run in a number of different directions.

10.15am fell in on the plan for a besuited member of a rather popular band to enter the Stock Exchange with a radio jammer in a case.

Tis the stuff of urban legend alas as to whether the signal was jammed and, in turn, the London Stock Exchange 'paused'.

I like to think that it did.

11.45am Stood on the steps of the Bank of England looking down over a crowd of punks and police when a mysterious arm hurls a blue paint bomb that squarely hits PC1984 in the face.

Bobby looks at me. I look at Bobby and no there is no love at first sight – only a face ready to burst with anger.

I am promptly chased which felt like running a marathon or being a walk on for a Buster Keaton flick. I would stop on every corner, wait, and then finally see an action painting of a police officer still pursuing me.

It turned into cat and mouse for the rest of the day.

Every hour crowds reconvened to surge on police lines and the disperse, moving quickly, one group leading police away whilst another were left free to break windows and destroy stuff.



## And All Around Was Darkness

Leaflets were given to workers, shoppers, drivers, tourists stating capitalism's grip on the global markets, the arms race and ultimately them.

Some screwed them up and dropped them there and then whereas some would be polite or say 'I'll read that later with my tea'.

'1, 2, 3, 4 We don't want your fucking war'

'Shut it down Shut it Down Shut it Down'

3pm Lull by the Bank of England.

Police snatch squads move in.

Guy with purple hair punched in the face and dragged away.

Friends protest and are assaulted as well.

Uniformed move in as a swell of resistance builds.

Police are charged down and retreat to rapturous delight from the people.

4.30pm I am stopped and searched by two officers who seize a metal pen stating it is an offensive weapon.

6pm March on Bow Street to demand the release of political prisoners.

Eventually some were just let out as the cells were clogged.

Our friends were received back as bandits.

The Police lines outside were weaved around by protesters with enthusiastic support from us – the mob – the many – the people.

We retreated to the relative safety of the Peace Centre.

Me – exhausted, dehydrated, and suffering the consequences of laxative mints.

Time for some more 'refreshment' and reflection on the day.

I close my eyes and fitfully dream of cowboy punks riding through the Rio Grande chasing the police.

They were using blue paint bombs and laxative mints as weapons.

Power to the People

Stop The City

Stop Them Now.

SATURDAY 16TH JANUARY, 1982  
DIRT / ANNIE ANXIETY / POLEMIC ATTACK / DOCUMENTARY PENI / SUB HUMANS / ANTHRAX.

THE CHURCH HALL, NORWICH ROAD,  
FOREST GATE, LONDON E.5.

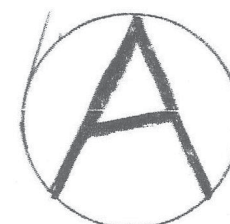
7.30pm - 11.00pm  
ADMISSION £1.00

TUESDAY 19TH JANUARY, 1982

ANNIE ANXIETY / DIRT / POLEMIC ATTACK

THE RED LION, PUB,  
GRAVESEND, KENT.

7.30 - 11.00pm  
ADMISSION £1.00



\*\*\*\*\*  
\* THE STRINGS ARE ATTACHED TO OUR \*  
\* NECKS LIKE A NOOSE, THE WOODEN CROSS \*  
\* ARE THE CONTROLS IN OUR BRAIN. WE \*  
\* JUMP AND FALL AND JERK AND SCREAM, \*  
\* ALL THE TIME WITH A PAIR OF SCISSORS IN \*  
\* OUR HAND. \*  
\*\*\*\*\*



TUESDAY 26TH JANUARY, 1982.

POISON GIRLS / DIRT / RUBELLA BALLET.  
THE HALF MOON, STEPNEY LONDON E.1.

7.30 - 11.00pm  
ADMISSION £1.00

SUNDAY 31ST. JANUARY, 1982.

DIRT / ANNIE ANXIETY / POLEMIC ATTACK / YOUTH IN ASIA  
THE AUTONOMY CENTRE  
METROPOLITAN WARE, WAPPING WALK ROAD,  
WAPPING.

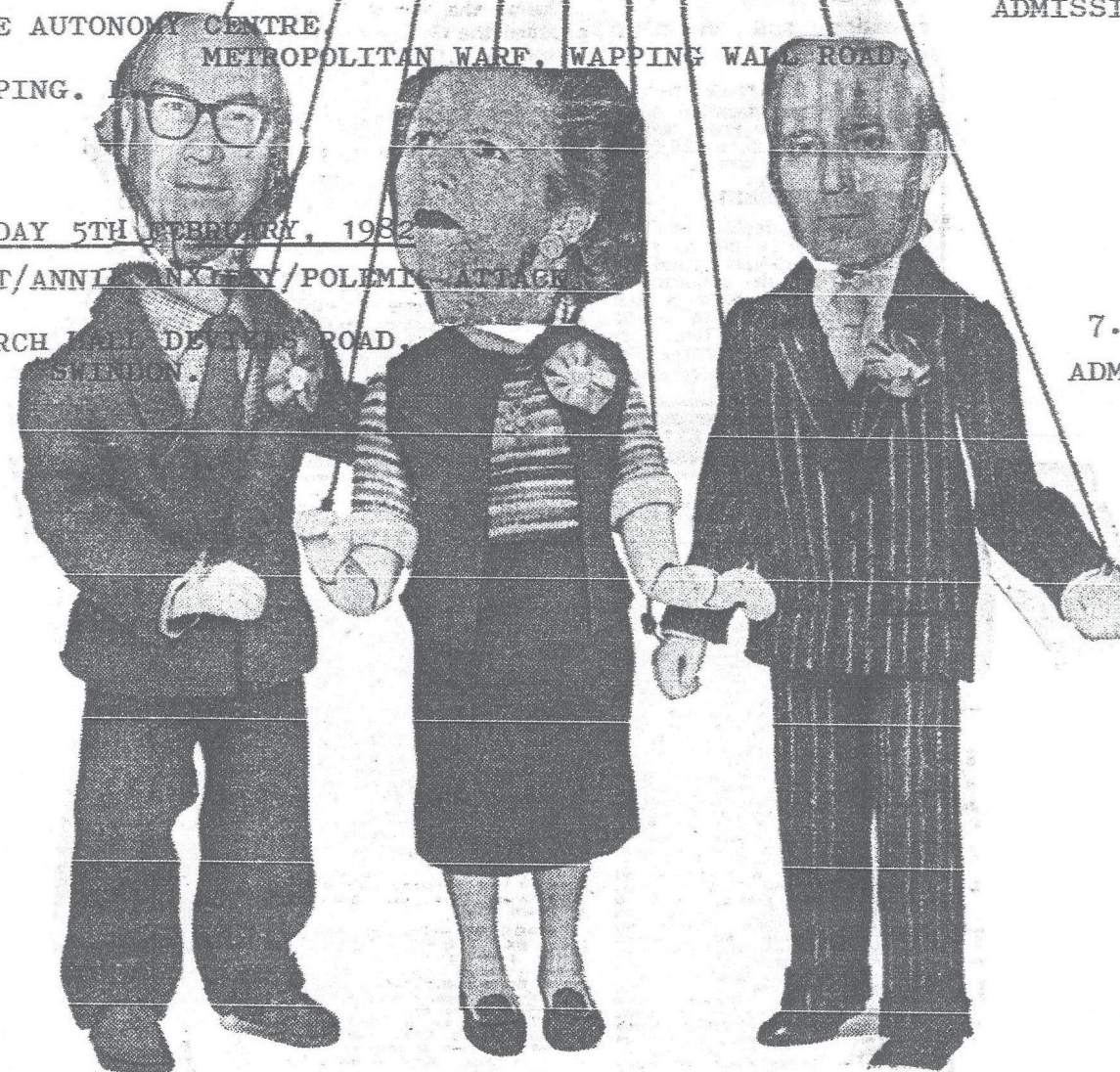
7.30 - 11.00pm  
ADMISSION 50p.

FRIDAY 5TH FEBRUARY, 1982

DIRT / ANNIE ANXIETY / POLEMIC ATTACK

CHURCH HALL, DEVIN ROAD,  
ST. LEONARD.

7.30pm - 11.00  
ADMISSION £1.00



Dirt '82



FROM WHERE DO YOU  
GET THE  
INSPIRATION  
FOR YOUR  
SOUND

COLLAGE?

"From Penny  
and from sounds  
that are everyday."  
WHAT SORT OF REACTION DO YOU GET  
FROM THE AUDIENCES TO YOUR  
PERFORMANCE?

"I couldn't begin to gauge that."  
WOULD YOU CLASS YOURSELF AS AN  
ANARCHIST?

"Yes, but I have never read any  
anarchist theory as I believe we  
are all born free but get polluted  
and contorted with crap as soon as  
we are given a name, so anarchy to  
me is the only natural state of  
being there is."

IS THERE ANY MESSAGE YOU TRY TO  
GET ACROSS IN YOUR POEMS?

"Yes, certainly, and I reckon if you  
don't have one there's no point in  
doing it. If music isn't  
questioning, confronting or tearing  
something down then it's a  
mindless pappy, poppy buzz which is  
pretty fucking irresponsible while  
people are being killed in Ireland,  
Lebanon, El Salvador and just about  
everywhere."

WHAT ARE YOUR POEMS ABOUT THEN?

"I think they speak for themselves  
but if there's a question about  
particulars it'd be easier to  
answer this."

WHEN DID YOU GET IN CONTACT WITH  
CRASS?



\*\*\*\*\*

"I met them all  
about five of  
six years ago,  
and things just  
progressed  
really."

WHAT DO YOU  
THINK OF YOUR  
'BARBED WIRE HALO'  
SINGLE?

"I'm very pleased  
with it."

HAVE YOU EVER  
CONSIDERED SINGING FOR  
A BAND?

"I sang with a band up  
until 1979. I'm doing what I'm  
doing now and if something else  
happens I will do that."

WHAT BANDS GOING AT THE MOMENT DO  
YOU LIKE?

"Crass, The System, The Alternative,  
Flux Of Pink Indians, Anthrax and  
Frank Sinatra."

DO YOU FEEL YOU HAVE ANYTHING IN  
COMMON WITH THE LIKES OF 'ANDY T' ?

"To a certain extent for we both  
work with sound of sound."

Annie Anxiety can be contacted  
through Crass records c/o Rough  
Trade, 137 Blenheim Crescent, London  
W11.

Sitting at the garden gate, standing  
at the gates of hell/lying in the  
grey grass jungle, rifle loaded  
lying low/tunnel underground, listen  
for the armies, listen for sounds/of  
Charlie growing stronger in the  
no-where zone/listen for the  
neighbours, Mary this is the way it  
happens Mary/just like this you see,  
just like this, this is, this is, is it,  
is it/rustle of sheets, footsteps of  
Christ in the desert/Jesus Christ in  
a whirlpool bath/dead burnt skin  
floats on the surface of water/  
arrange your life girl/derranged in

## SMASH THE SYSTEM - ATTACKING THE EDUCATION SYSTEM 1983[?]

### Persons Unknown

[The events in this story are true as much as I can remember them. All names and places are changed to protect the guilty. Anarcho-punk created many Persons Unknown and many acts of sedition were carried out by the punks dressed in black. The following attack on the state machine didn't lead to the introduction of a free and equal society. We were deadly earnest in our belief that we could change the system... and this was another small step which had to be taken to get there. This isn't an exact re-telling of the tale, so some details may be changed slightly, but the facts as I remember them are correct.]

So there we all were. Six or seven of us dressed from head to foot in black. All wearing balaclavas. Our pockets stuffed with super glue, evostick and I had a small tin of wood-filler and a small putty-knife. Why didn't I have proper glue? I hadn't got any money and had forgotten that we were going to attack the school [I had until very recently been attending] and so I had to search my grandad's tool cupboard and this was all I could find. With hindsight carrying the small putty-knife could have been a major mistake.

Imagine it then. You are nervous, scared, excited, anxious, euphoric and absolutely shitting yourself all at the same time. We were lined up, lying down in the dark surveying the school, which was about 50 yards from our position. We were lying down on the grass of the playing fields. We were breathing deeply, having sprinted across some open grass and putting on our balaclavas and getting ready for the attack. An attack on property not people. It's very dark, but the school is lit up in places on the outside, and we reckon there may be a security guard or two on site. But no one is really sure.

I don't think we had reached a high enough level of precision planning in our lives to really work things through. Besides, that wasn't anarchy was it?

So how come a group of [mostly] white, middle-classed school and college boys were planning to deface public property and wilfully cause criminal damage designed to disrupt the school and send a message of defiance to our rulers?

Crass; Flux of Pink Indians; Conflict; Subhumans; and more.

See, X had found these peace punk bands, as had X, and my best mate from school X as well liked the black and white bands as we called them. And I was gradually getting to like the spirit of rebellion and the concept of anarchy and vegetarianism.

[Of course initially I had argued with X, who was a vegetarian, rather stupidly that "if we didn't eat cows then the whole country would be overrun with them, so in fact eating meat is a GOOD thing." My very patient friend X had quite rightly told me I was being a fucking idiot and so it was I became a vegetarian and that made me oh so much more holier than thou. It was also a very good line to use when talking to girls as it showed my compassionate and caring side. My first attempt at being a



vegetarian lasted less than twenty-four hours, mostly due to mixing a lack of food with alcohol; but that's a story for another time.]

Then you realise that reading all these black and white pamphlets, posters, 7" record covers and 12" album covers which all fold out into posters and A5 sized booklets CRAMMED WITH PAGE UPON PAGE OF TIGHTLY WRITTEN TEXT ALL SPELLED OUT IN CAPITALS DESIGNED TO GIVE EVEN THE MOST HEALTHY PERSON A BLINDING MIGRAINE has a point. The point is you [we/us] are expected to carry out direct action to smash the system. The bands are doing their job by educating us into doing what's right. We [the public] are then going to rise up and smash the system. It all makes sense in your head somehow that it's now time to take that direct action.

So it's now down to deciding on something to do.

I don't remember who came up with the idea.

I do remember we used to drink a lot of tea, and I mean a lot. And smoke lots of cigarettes. Marlboro was my death stick of choice at the time. X and X smoked JPS. We had worked out that rolling our own ["rollies"] was much cheaper than the readymade type. I think X may have religiously smoked rollies but he was always happy to take a readymade if it was offered. I think the combination of no filters in those days and the fact that as far as I was concerned only dope smoking hippies rolled their own cigarettes and our general laziness meant we mostly smoked cigarettes which we believed hadn't been tested on animals. [Even though I believe an un-named band later wrote a song about this called Beagles Smoke Bensons.]

But the tea-drinking was very important. No, we weren't sitting around drinking and taking drugs. We were serious about this anarchy thing. And we were going to jolly well do something about the injustices in the system and take direct action and stick it to them. But we would have a cup of tea first. In a two hour session we would easily drink six cups of tea each. So at my house planning took place in the small dining room, which adjoined the kitchen and made tea making much easier. There was also a wall mounted phone in the dining room [I think we actually called it The Breakfast Room thinking about it now] which meant that if we needed to run an idea past a non-attendee, we could ring their house for clarification.

Remember there is no internet. No mobile phones. Written exchanges take days to arrive at the other end [if they aren't being intercepted by the filth, the pigs, the rossers who have secret files on ALL of us] and as we soap the stamps so they can be reused [I only ever did this a handful of times as I was probably too lazy to write to nearly anyone, and far too disorganised to soap the stamp before sending it] I suspect that many times letters just got thrown in the bin by the posties.

And so it was that out of the various targets we had considered [Butcher's Shops, The Police Station [!], various other Government buildings] the XXXXXXXXXX School was our final choice of target. XXX had read that if you surreptitiously emptied a tube of Superglue into a lock while the door was closed, it would jam the workings within seconds and render the door locked and impossible to open. This would mean the entire school, if we super-glued every lock, would be closed the next day.

This in turn would lead to lots of happy teenage schoolboys, it would mean that over 1000 young men would have nothing to do that day.

Which would mean a rise in civil unrest and disobedience all across the town!

This plan relied heavily on being able [and willing] to spend the time super-gluing up ALL the locks on ALL the outside doors of the school. I don't think we had really thought out the logistics, the amount of super-glue needed, and the time to do all this without getting caught. In fact looking back my memory of any sort of "planning" is totally missing. I may have not taken it all too seriously in the build up. Which lead, as stated above to me having a tin full of wood-filler in my pocket and NOT the previously mentioned superior super-glue.

So there we were all ready to put the plan into action. And now it all becomes a bit of a blur. I think we split up into pairs and made our way, in the quiet dark air, to the various entrances to the school and began our work. Now for me this meant prising open the tin and getting out a small amount of wood filler and carefully filling the key holes to the various doors. All the while terrified of being caught, which would mean facing those authorities which I was terrified of. So it was done in a state of almost complete panic. We hurried around the school in a sort of haphazard fashion, whispering and keeping an eye out, whilst trying our best to seal up as many locks as we could.

I would like to think we did this in a controlled organised way. But I can't genuinely remember much about it. I think we had some torches. But I am not sure. Logically this was probably all done and over in something like half an hour, but to me looking back it seems like it was all over in an instant. I think we all agreed to make our way back to X's house afterwards in our pairs for a cup of tea and more planning [and smoking of course].

As soon as we were finished we made our way out of the school grounds and in a circuitous route made our way back to the main road. Removing our balaclavas before emerging into the lit streets. I have a recollection of relief, joy and even exhilaration once we had finished. But I was still half terrified that we had been spotted and that a police car was waiting just round the corner. Whether we dumped the balaclavas and glue pots [and wood filler tin] I don't know. I doubt it somehow.

The walk to X's house was a good twenty minutes or so. I was scared pretty much up to the point that we got to X's front door and hurried inside. The feeling of terror was pretty much overwhelming the feeling of happiness still. I remember some collective smiles and we talked through what had happened, a little, and it was then that we came up with the final job to be done that night.

I don't recall how it came about but we decided to call up the local Newspaper and "claim responsibility for the attack on XXXXXXXXXX School on behalf of the XXXXXXXXXX Anarchists Federation. By this point it was well after 11pm and I think the person who answered the phone at the Newspaper was a little confused about the message as our spokesperson made a statement down the phone and then hurriedly hung up.



By now certainly we were feeling a lot cockier and were convinced that the next day there would be confusion at the school and that the whole town would be wondering who this new Anarchist Federation was. And then how we would smirk when the local newspaper printed the front page headline!

As with all tales of this kind the harsh light of the next day's reality shone very brightly on the events of the previous night.

I waited with baited breath for someone to phone me up and tell me all about the chaos at school; as I still had friends who attended. But nothing much happened. I think I even phoned someone up and asked if there was any news from school, or gossip to get a very vague response about some locksmiths being called as some vandals had glued up a couple of locks or something.

So not the response I was expecting there.

The local paper came.

Nothing in that either.

And so it was that this minor token tantrum, this slap in the face of authority had, seemingly achieved very little. It did however, teach me one thing. Well... it re-enforced one thing in my mind – the fact that I was utterly terrified of authority and was unlikely to do anything similar again in my life. A bit like when you realise that shop-lifting even a really inexpensive item could lead to a court case and the shame and humiliation that would be heaped upon you. And the fact that your parents, who you dearly love, would be so disappointed in you.

That word.

Disappointed.

And the fact that you can't explain you are trying to change society's attitude towards education because all you did was cause some damage to school property. So you form a band – it's the next logical step. And sing songs to encourage others, more brave than yourself, to take up the struggle.

## 'RUNNING WILD IN THE DISCO': AN INTERVIEW WITH GERARD EVANS

**Mike Dines**

Gerard Evans is the lead singer and co-founder of the band Flowers in the Dustbin, author of *The Story of Crass* and is a practitioner of Mindfulness. I met him at his home on the south-coast of the UK.

**I'm interested in the ways in which the anarcho-punk scene remains part of our critical consciousness. This interview came about because of your post entitled 'The Journey and the Destination' on the *Everyday Mindfulness* website. You begin your post in 1988, a couple of years after the initial split of FITD and a time when you initially moved to Brighton. Can you tell me why you moved to Brighton?**

Yeah, when the band ended I was kind of listless. My mum and dad were in Bromley and they decided to go back to Liverpool because my dad had retired and he was in ill health. I was living with them (for the sake of vanity I wasn't always living there) but at that point I was back with them. So I had an interview with a guy in Brighton, very much like the one I'm having now, and I told him I've got to find somewhere to live. He said why don't you come down to Brighton because we've got a spare room. I was on the dole at the time and didn't have many options, so I decided to come down.

In terms of what you initially asked, if we talk about FITD first, we weren't as solidly in that network as much as other bands were. I don't mean with that as a gripe. I'm very comfortable with that, because I would say that I probably feel more outside it on various levels, which I'm happy to talk about. I mean, we don't get offered the gigs like other bands; it's not that we say no, it's mainly because no one asks us. And that's because we're not seen to be as much of a part of all that as, perhaps, as Hagar the Womb, who seem to be doing gigs every week. For instance, we never did gigs with Crass, Conflict, or Flux of Pink Indians. We were always further outside from that than our records would suggest. And that suggestion came about due to our association with All Madmen Records and Mortarhate.

Let's go back a bit further. When we started, we just couldn't get gigs [laughs]. But then we got offered a gig at the George Robey via some promoter who it just happened to be with either the Lost Cherrees or Omega Tribe, one of the two. During our soundcheck we got offered another gig at the same place for two days later on. So the way it developed was that we were obviously playing with those bands, kind of second-generation bands, those who were not just having stuff out on Crass Records. So, we started to do that, but what I always wanted to do, because my favourite band was Adam and the Ants, and the bands I was listening to at the time were Southern Death Cult, Sex Gang Children, Bauhaus, etc., I wanted to do something as good as those bands musically. I thought that a lot of the anarcho bands music was shit to be honest, admirable politics, but the music just left me nonplussed a lot of the time, so I wanted to like mix the two things. Hence, the one step removed that we have always been.



But the ‘ideas’ side of things, that’s where it really did chime for me, and in particularly the protest movements like the big CND marches. I was very passionate about animal rights and vivisection – I used to know what all the E numbers were. Looking back, I wonder what I boring bloke I must have been! But that’s how I was.

And we lived in this kind of commune-type house – we being me and few other people, not the band – and that was very much a political activist-type place from which we were involved in the first Stop the City, for instance, and that sort of thing. With hindsight, I was sold the utopian line and I look back on that with cynicism because it was clearly utopian and the people who were older than us, I think, were being pretty dishonest. It was never gonna happen and I think that that kind of utopian-thing kind of weakens people. Particularly as it kind of gradually dawns on you that it’s not gonna happen. I also believe that it’s based on a very Judeo-Christian thing – I might be wrong as to the roots of it – but the whole thing about the perfectibility of mankind. Again, I think that’s a pretty poor line of existentialism. Humans are not perfectible, certainly not through listening to punk records, that’s for sure.

So, I have mixed feeling about the whole scene, but the stuff that stuck around for me was the animal rights stuff, the sense of being on the far-left and I would specifically say that I certainly wasn’t one of these ‘left-wing, right-wing you can stuff the lot’ people. But then again, I was on the far left already, probably down to John Lennon more than anybody else. So yeah, I think the anarcho-punk thing had massive, massive value. The present day preponderance of vegetarian food being a good example, although I don’t think you could have put it all down to anarcho-punk, because if you went on animal rights marches there weren’t a lot of anarcho-punks there even at the height of the movement. I think what is going on here is quite a bit of revisionism to be honest. I think people are looking to claim a legacy for themselves and in doing so are prone to exaggeration as to how important things were. On a micro level, they were important, but in terms of how much we changed the world, well, who knows. I think it’s important it get it recorded but I also think there needs a sense of perspective. Because for instance, CND didn’t get revived because of anarcho-punk, but because of the imminent threat of nuclear war. And Glastonbury Festival was also a big influence on CND. It’s not a competition, but it needs to be put into perspective.

**In *The Story of Crass*, you note that ‘Penny Rimbaud has taken of late to complaining at every given opportunity about how Crass have been airbrushed out of punk histories.’ You wrote that is 2005ish, and of course Crass are not airbrushed out of history now.**

What we’ve seen since I wrote that is a bit of a rebalancing. Not just in the sort of stuff that you’re doing, but in a more general level. When *The Guardian* does something around punk now, for instance, there is often stuff about Crass, or Steve Ignorant or something. So I think there has been a valuable readdressing of the history of punk.

**What are your thoughts around there being a core anarcho-punk ‘movement’? Do you think it was it as unified as is often written and thought?**

There were a core of anarchists that you got at the front of the speakers on marches who would generally heckle and be unpleasant and that sort of became the anarcho-punk types. But for me it was all punk. I got into punk with the Pistols and the Clash, I loved all that and for me, when Crass came out, it was a really specific moment because a lot of bands seemed to be – like The Jam, who censored some of their lyrics (‘This is the Modern World’) and Splodgenessabounds, who brought out an album where they clearly thought they would get a crack at the charts, so half the swearwords disappeared from their songs – and you had a general sense that it was fizzling out. And then you had the mod revival and the Two-Tone bands. And then Crass came along with this thing that was clearly unrecuperable: every other word was fuck, so that wasn’t gonna get on *Top of the Pops*!

So that was really kind of fantastic. I don’t know if it’s obvious, but in the book about Crass. I completely ignore their record label, and that’s deliberate because I have really very little positive to say about the fact that they did that. That’s where the movement solidified around the label and I didn’t like that – I mean it was up to them and not up to me – but I didn’t like it cos before anarcho-punk was called that, we (I mean the people on the ground) used to call them ‘Crass bands’. What a damning thing to do, to call a band a derivative of another band. And then you had all these people wearing black clothes, uniforms. Crass fans were old punks at first but as time went on, a new generation of people getting into it and it was thoroughly different. For a start they didn’t dye their hair! We’d go to Crass gigs and everyone would have brown hair! But at punk gigs previous to that you saw loads of crazy colours. It all went a bit grey. I’ve never thought about this, but it seems they followed a similar trajectory to the hippies. Where the hippies started off with the psychedelic, swinging 60s London – looking really colourful and far-out – and then, by the mid-70s they were all wearing army great-coats and looking like Neil off *The Young Ones*.

**Because you weren’t grey were you? Nor were bands like Rubella Ballet.**

Of course, yeah. I mean, we didn’t dress up like Rubella Ballet. They made – and continue to make – a thing about the day-glo, which is really cool. We weren’t like that. But we weren’t tied into black clothes or anything like that. I certainly wasn’t, I was probably quite keen to deliberately not look like that. Although I felt an affinity on some levels with anarcho-punk, but as time went on I got a bit disillusioned.

**Do you think that was due to you being on the periphery of the anarcho-scene?**

Yeah, I wasn’t massively interested in belonging. In hindsight, a lot of people went to the Wapping Anarchy Centre and sort of found their people, they found a place to belong. Which was really cool. But that wasn’t really what happened to me. I was definitively out on an individualist trip. For me, John Lydon was the influence rather than Crass and the right to be yourself, which I feel a little bit uncomfortable when I talk about, because there is an uneasy cross-over with Thatcherism in that respect. That was the right to be yourself and the right to be different. That was my primary battle, because I was always gonna stand out of the crowd cos of my size for instance. It didn’t matter what crowd. So I had a consciousness through all that which was slightly different and I wanted to play for the people who were outside of everything:



not just for people who had found a way of being inside the outsiders. The real freaks, if you like, those who would get something out of it.

And people did. We weren't half as big as some other bands, but sometimes we would get letters that showed an astonishing connection. People who had really been moved by your music. That really made it worth it for me because that's why I was doing I guess, I was doing it for the individuals who were dotted about thinking they didn't fit in with anything, rather than the people who thought 'great, I've got somewhere to fit in now.'

**You say that you were influenced by John Lydon and elsewhere you talk about being influenced by David Bowie. I would say that the theatricality of both these artists are evident in your work.**

My first love was Glam Rock. That's what I brought up seeing on *Top of the Pops*, seeing Slade, Sweet and Gary Glitter (if you forget what a bad man he is!). The thing about these people were that they were just incredibly out there and it was just a generation thing, so that's what I was into. I wasn't particularly aware of Bowie at that point, I was too young to get the nuances of Bowie. Plus, Bowie was from Bromley, as everybody from Bromley was enormously pleased about, because there wasn't much in Bromley to be proud of round there. Apart from the Glam Rock thing, I didn't have Bowie down as a real influence in hindsight, but what I did get from him what I wanted to give other people which was the stance of the outsider and the right to be yourself. Like Johnny Rotten really, that kind right to be different, the right to be a freak and the right to not be ashamed of being yourself.

**And I think this makes sense. When you look at your videos, especially in the background of an otherwise drab, anarcho-punk aesthetic. I was reading Alistair Livingstone's piece 'Punk Lives in the Strangest Places', and he talks about the gig with Blood and Roses. This was your final gig as Anabolic Steroids. Can you tell me a little bit about your relationship with the centre?**

I didn't go there a lot to be honest. First of all, it was a long way from Bromley, especially to get home again, this being an obvious curse of living in the suburbs. I wish I'd gone there more, because after that I got more friendly with the Puppy crowd and I felt at home with them, whereas I didn't particularly feel at home with the wider anarcho-thing. In terms of Centro Iberico, I was quite surprised, because when Wapping kind of folded in on itself it didn't occur to me that anyone would try and keep it going anywhere else. But yeah, I never played there as FITD. Our first gig was in Wolverhampton with Curse of Eve. They were a wonderful band, because they were from Telford, and the whole anarcho-thing there was totally different. In Telford people always seemed to be doing it for themselves, and they always seemed to have access to cheap printing and they always seemed to be really creative. Also, there didn't seem to be all that black clothed influence there for reasons I have no idea about. But it just seemed a lot more open and fluid there. Yeah, it was a real pleasure to do our first gig with Curse of Eve.

**Alistair notes how you were part of the 'anarcho-punk goth' scene of Blood and Roses, etc.**

If you have to have a label then that's pretty close. Because we were going to see Sex Gang Children, Bauhaus, Southern Death Cult, The Cramps, and other bands. Obviously I also used to go and see Crass, even at the end I would go and see Crass, even if their records had gone off. But that was one part of a bigger whole. I think that it seems to me that there was a real disconnect between London and everywhere else when it came to the anarcho scene. Because I think what was going on in London seemed like it must have been quite different than what was going on in Cornwall or something. Alistair, for me, has got it spot-on. What is really interesting about Crass and London, was that they weren't actually in London. They weren't far out of it, but you would very rarely see them at any other people's gigs.

I believe that anarcho-punk would have happened without Crass, and it would have been interesting to see how it would have developed. People often see Crass as 'anarcho-punk', as anarcho-punk coming out from Crass, but there were other bands about: Crisis being one of them. The world does not remember Crisis as being anarcho-punk, but that's because it remembers all the Crass stuff. It was a weird time. Although no-one realized the enormity of it, Thatcher getting in was really important, especially with The Falkland War, the Miners Strike and the Battle of the Beanfield. In terms of the Falklands, this was the first war – apart from the war in Ireland of course – that was reported as a 'war' in my lifetime.

**Let's return to your musical career. I noted your enthusiasm for Curse of Eve. What was it like playing with them?**

It was a pleasure to be honest. The gig came about because I was going up to Telford all the time, although I can't remember why it was in Wolverhampton. There was another band called The Sears who kind of headlined the show, and they were a really good band too. The second and third gigs were in London in the George Robey and then we just started getting gigs partly because of people perceiving we were part of all that. I mean, we were part of it, we did Stop the City benefits for instance, and various other benefits.

**How did you get involved with All the Madmen records?**

We only ever played once with The Mob. We were playing this gig in Harrow and Mick Lugworm, who lived in the house with Mark Mob and Tony Puppy, etc., he came up and said, do you want to do a record on All the Madmen, which came completely out of the blue. I didn't think we were ready for a record; this was like a dream that happened to other people. So we recorded a record [*Freaks Run Wild in the Disco*] and we did a gig with The Mob. I really liked The Mob. There were few bands that the band all agreed on and they were one of them. I used to go and see them all the time in London.

**Did you see yourself as an anarcho-punk?**

I saw myself as an anarchist and I saw myself as a punk. I sometimes wonder whether anarcho-punk was anarchist or punk, really, because when I saw myself as anarchist I was probably thinking about people like Stuart Christie and people like that, and when I saw myself as a punk I was thinking about the Sex Pistols and people like that. I don't want to write Crass out of the story, because they were a big influence as



well, but I never liked labels and instinctively thought that these labels would start building walls around people. The enthusiasm to which people self-ghettoised just shocked me. I really thought people would rebel against that. Part of that rebellion was that you wouldn't be neatly labeled and defined. But I was wrong.

**So, now we're up to 1986 and the end of FITD.**

Yeah, what happened to me was that I was devastated when the Miners' Strike was lost because I thought that the whole future of this country was at stake and not just the miners. It seemed such an ideological battle between Thatcher's values and what I would call decent values. And when Thatcher won that, I was absolutely devastated in the same way that I would be if Trump got voted in. I mean Trump is a nightmare, but the people who vote for him are the really scary ones. It's like Brexit. How can the majority of people vote for something so crazy? So, when the Miners' Strike happened, and was lost, I was lost. Previous to that, the future seemed to be sort of living in housing co-ops, getting licenses for squats. Social progress, more people becoming vegetarian, more people being nicer to each other. Although the Miners' Strike didn't directly stop any of that, it seemed to me like a hammer blow. And how we dealt with that in terms of the band, I mean, where do we go from there? It's really difficult.

Crass had just got awful by that stage. For me, their final few records had gone from being a really interesting, important band, to being like one of those 4<sup>th</sup> division anarcho bands. No vision, no new ideas, just moaning. I mean, I did get it. But we didn't know what to do after the Miners' Strike. It didn't help that we [the band] were getting more and more hedonistic, drinking more and smoking more dope. Just figuring out that life would be acceptable if we could make a living out of music. We didn't really have anything else, we were just signing on the dole. So, we started getting our act together musically. We weren't planning to sell out, but at that point our ultimate idea would be to go on Wogan and do a Bill Grundy! [Laughs]. Although it would have probably ended one of us doing a Sid Vicious. We weren't taking heroin but we were caning it pretty hard and now I look back, it was a way of dealing with the fact that the war was over and the good guys lost.

**Because you got a broken leg at one of your last gigs didn't you?**

Yeah, it was Chas and Bill having a fight and me trying to break it up. It was at Surrey University. Funnily enough, that wasn't the end of the band. We literally hobbled on for a couple more gigs. But it was pretty much untenable by then. It was kind of Chas that was on his own in a lot of arguments; and I suppose that, because me and Chas couldn't keep it together, it was inevitable that it ran its course. It was a shame, because the bands that kept going, developed their own cottage industry.

**And, as we were talking about earlier, 1988 saw you move down to Brighton.**

Yeah, the band had split up, and I was thinking about what to do next. I was on the dole and did an interview with this guy, Lee Oliver, who was living in a shared house in Brighton and suggested that I move in. I hadn't considered moving away from Bromley – that's where my friends were – but I had a good think and moved down there in January 1988. And it was astonishing. It was so different. Where I was living

in Bromley I was getting stopped and searched 4 or 5 times a week, but in Brighton no-one stopped and searched you. So you could carry your dope around in your pocket instead of down your pants or down your socks. It was just relaxed and happy. Little things, like if you phone for a taxi the people on the switchboard were happy. There was this level of happiness. And of course you could walk home from gigs, instead of having to struggle to get home after a gig. I was living near the Richmond, a place that had lots of gigs and we lived about 5 minutes walk from the venue. Without me thinking about it, I kind of ceased drinking. Not on a conscious level, I just kind of 'forgot' to drink. I mean, I was still smoking a lot, but just didn't feel the need to drink. There was just an astonishing feeling that something was different. But then, it all starts slipping away and life gets back to normal, and, although Brighton was still better than Bromley, I started to get fed up with it.

**And why was that?**

Because it was so small. I was used to anonymity in London, in other words, you could go and make a cunt out of yourself in Camden, but had 800 other cool places to go whilst you could let Camden cool off. But if you made a cunt out of yourself in Brighton, there really wasn't anywhere else to go. Also, the people I was kind of mixing with had much more of a hippy vibe to them than anyone I'd really encountered in London. It's really unfair to call it a hippy vibe, it was more like a docile, childish irritating thing that pushed me back to remembering that I was from a football background, and I probably played that up a bit, which possibly has a resonance of what I was saying before about individuality and deliberately going too far the other way a bit. So I ended up moving back up to London two years later. At that point, I'd started writing for *Sounds*, the music paper so I ended up having some good years in London doing a job most people would give their right-arm for. And then I came back to Brighton in 1991 because *Sounds* closed down, and I've been yo-yoing between London and Brighton ever since.

**You mention the 'hippyness' of Brighton. Because of your working class background of football do you feel that you came to mindfulness and meditation in a different way to others?**

I had to jump through a few more hoops to get there than perhaps some people who have a skinny latte in Costa Coffee and chat to their friends about it. And because I had to jump through those hoops I feel that I've gone into a lot deeper than some people. The way I'd got into it there was no question of pissing about, because if I'd been some kind of hobbyist about it I just wouldn't have been there in the first place. But I've got into it willingly at the deep end and I don't think that everyone we see does that. It's a really difficult question to answer, because you can never really know. I always had sympathy for this kind of stuff, it was just that the social demographic around it, as I perceived it, I found really, really, off-putting. I do feel a little awkward sometimes in these situations, but of course the mindfulness helps me in dealing with that. I went to the Brighton Buddhist Centre at the beginning of my journey of meditation, and I thought that we would all be sitting on the floor cross-legged (something that I can't do because of the incident when I broke my leg), because that's what you always see in pictures of when people meditate. And so I got there



early and I asked the woman on the door if there was someone I could talk to for a few minutes because I didn't quite know what to do. I talked to this average looking bloke who told me that I could just sit in a chair if I wanted, and that's what I did. I was also scared about it being an hour long. I'd never done more than twenty-minutes, and I was wondering what would happen if you got cramp or something, but after the hour was up I felt fantastic. Ironically, I had to get into meditation to break down those barriers that I had in getting into meditation. In breaking down those barriers in dealing with people who weren't like me. And now I realize that they are like me, and that it was me projecting stuff on them. And this is what I'm trying to do now, to take mindfulness to people like me. The people who really need it are rarely the people who get it, instead of those who are just trying it out as the latest thing in between baby yoga and Pilates. The people who really need it are people who are stuck on a council estate, who can't afford to pay the rent and who unfortunately don't know it exists. And I would like to somehow get mindfulness to those people. And my business partner and I have plenty of plans afoot to try to get mindfulness out there. Bizarrely enough, my business partner is an old music journalist who came to see Flowers back in 1983 whom I didn't know. I was always one step removed from him. He used to share a house with a friend of mine. He ended up working for *Loaded*, interviewing all these hell-raisers.

**So, FITD have reformed and you're playing the 'Grow Your Own Mini-Festival' in London at the Dublin Castle, Camden.**

Yes, we are. And regarding being part of things and so on, I've got to say that the people we're playing with at the festival are people whom I'm comfortable to say that I feel part of. The guys out of Anthrax, for example, are fantastic, and we've always had a perceived kindred spirit with Hagar the Womb, even though our bands aren't like each other really. Anarchistwood are quite an astonishing band, I'm really delighted that Hysteria Ward are playing because we've always been really good friends and The Fleas are this new band. So I'm really comfortable with doing records and gigs with those guys.

I felt the same when All the Madmen put out our record back in the day. It was when Alistair [Livingstone] was running the show. I felt that there was a meeting of minds; that we were going in the same direction. In fact, the other band who we thought were going in the same direction were The Smiths and it was something that me and Alistair used to talk about quite a bit. Of how we might be able to get into The Smiths fans. I was in Rough Trade once collecting our mail and the guy behind the counter said that's The Smiths over there, and I didn't talk to them. Those little moments on life. I mean, they might have told me to fuck off, but you never know. Perhaps we could have become friends and done gigs together. I'd be next to a swimming pool now in Los Angeles refusing to do interviews, saying 'I don't talk about the old anarcho days!' [Laughs]

**In The Story of Crass you note that 'revisiting those years has been a strange experience. They were the punk years – years when we could be heroes, just like the Bowie song. And we were heroes... But these were also the Thatcher years [and] we're still living with her legacy and many are still dying with it.' What**

**was it like writing the story of Crass in terms of your own experience and taking yourself back to that era.**

There was quite a context to writing the book. Firstly, I was quite ill, I was undiagnosed diabetic who became diagnosed in the course of writing the book. I was struggling to run a business at the same time, so the book was written in my spare time, so a combination of that and being ill – because diabetes untreated means that you're in a place beyond tired, a space where tired doesn't even sum it up really. There was also some horrible domestic stuff going on that I don't want to go into here. So, to write that book at all was a difficult experience. Plus, I always had dichotomies about Crass. On the one hand they were great – *Feeding of the 5000* was an astonishing record – but on the other hand, there was the Crass Records thing that I thought was counter-productive. I can understand why they did it, but I felt uncomfortable about the whole control over the recording process. So, when I was writing the book I was trying to reconcile those ambiguities.

Also, I couldn't believe that they had been left out of the story. I'd kept in touch with Penny and I'd phoned him up one night pissed, because I fancied a chat. I told Penny that someone had suggested I write a book about Crass, thinking that it would never happen, and he said that I should do it. I was shocked; I told him that I didn't expect him to say that. I told him to give me week so that I could have a think about it. So the whole experience for me was one of confusion, where I had to decide on what angle I was going to take. I know that I've read a few reviews that are pissed off that I didn't take more of a political angle, but I think that would have been really difficult. Also, it didn't really interest me to be honest: I'd done all that. I didn't see Crass as leaders but as fellow travellers. So the angle that I really wanted to go down was the art angle, as that was what really set Crass apart from bands such as the Exploited or Discharge, the different artistic levels. Also, it was a way through. I also wanted to write an objective narrative, to move away from the sanctimonious views of some people, who thought that Crass started punk and that the Sex Pistols were just a heavy metal band, which is kind of becoming one established way of thinking on social media.

So writing the book felt weird, it felt more important that it ended up being, because the band fascinated a lot of people. But my main reason to write this was to do my bit, to contribute towards social process. So for people to say that I've done it on a capitalist publisher is just crazy. The guy who put that out is a good friend of The Who, he was a big champion of Slade and he works pretty much on his own in an office. I can't believe it when people turn round and talk about it being a capitalist label just because it wasn't on fucking AK Press something.

**Is that what people have said to you?**

Oh no, never to your face. Keyboard warriors you know? Funnily enough, when I first talked to Penny, I said that I'd probably talk to PM Press or AK Press, he said no, go for a proper publisher (he might not have used the word 'proper' by the way), but what he meant was to go for a big publisher, to get it out there. And I was happy to do that. I know that I would get criticized for so-called 'selling out,' although that's clearly not what I've done. It's the old *Top of the Pops* argument isn't it? It's just weird



to know that some people see me as some kind of Trump apologist because it didn't come out on AK Press or whatever.

Interesting story, but when I printed the manuscript out I took it to the pub and was proofreading it. Because the 'posh' publisher didn't have a proofreader, so you had to do it yourself. On the way home from the pub – I left the pub at eleven and it was a fifteen minute walk back to my house – and at two in the morning I was discovered unconscious on the pavement with my wallet, bag, shoes and the manuscript gone. What is even more bizarre is that I'm woken up by two plainclothes cops who then offers to walk me home. If you were to lend yourself to conspiracy theories, then you would wonder why two plainclothes policemen were walking me home. Isn't that the job of a uniform copper? Also, this is a Friday night and someone has called them because I've collapsed on the pavement. But why wasn't an ambulance called? It was weird. I remember leaving the pub feeling okay, but 5 minutes later I'm collapsed on the floor. There is an explanation here, with diabetes for instance, in that I could have had a diabetic attack, but the rest of it is a bit bizarre.

So, if you were to lend yourself to conspiracy theories, they might have wanted to check the manuscript to make sure I hadn't written anything too risqué or outrageous. But you never know just how close Crass had been, with the Dennis Thatcher call-girl incident, or Wally Hope. Personally, I just think that I had a diabetic attack, but I can't help ruminating on the fact that there were two plainclothes cops, presuming they were plainclothes cops, walking me home at two in the morning.

## CONTRIBUTORS

### Russ Bestley

Russ Bestley is Reader in Graphic Design at the London College of Communication. His areas of specialist interest include graphic design and popular music, particularly punk rock, humour and English identity. His PhD, *Hitsville UK: Punk Rock and Graphic Design in the Faraway Towns, 1976-84*, completed in 2008, led to several publications, a website, [www.hitsvilleuk.com](http://www.hitsvilleuk.com), and a range of post-doctoral research including exhibitions of punk art and design in London, Southampton, Blackpool, Leeds and Birmingham. He contributed articles to *Punk & Post Punk*, *Eye*, *Zed*, *Emigré*, *The National Grid*, *360°*, *Street Sounds* and *Vive Le Rock*, and his book *The Art of Punk* was published by Omnibus Press in 2012. Russ has designed books, posters, programmes and music graphics for the Punk Scholars Network, Active Distribution, Viral Age Records, PM Press and other DIY and independent labels, publishers and producers. He is Editor of the journal *Punk & Post Punk*, and a member of the Punk Scholars Network.

### Greg Bull

Greg Bull heard the Sex Pistols as a 12 year old and liked the noise they made. He liked their energy. He liked their attitude. And he liked their dress-sense and their rejection of authority. He didn't really know or understand this at the time as he just felt these things without understanding them. But he didn't become a punk then. Later in the early 1980s Greg met up with like-minded individuals who turned him on to 'Black and White' bands such as Crass, and he met and went to see Antisect quite a few times as well. He listened to a wide-range of music though and avoided proper 'work' until the mid 1990s. He is writing things down now from his memory of those times. Co-editor of *Tales From The Punkside*, *Not Just Bits of Paper* and *Some of Us Scream... Some of Us Shout*, he is still working on the final part of his punk/sci-fi novella trilogy which began with *Perdam Babylonis Nomen*, and continued with *Deus Magnus Timor Mortuum*.

### Graham Burnett

Graham Burnett is a teacher of permaculture and the author of *Permaculture: A Beginner's Guide* and *The Vegan Book of Permaculture*. He first heard of the the concept of Permaculture in an article in *Peace News* and, following extensive training and research, he founded Spiralseed in 2001: working with organisations and projects including Comic Relief, Capital Growth and the Vegan Organic Network. He co-runs a number of permaculture course across the UK.

### Rich Cross

Rich Cross first encountered punk rock as a surly young teenager in the seething metropolis of Exeter, Devon in the late 1970s. He has clear memories of delivering copies of the 'Filth and the Fury' edition of the *Daily Mirror* to the residents of Heavitree on his morning paper-round on 2 December 1976. Although, as it was the copies of the first edition that made their way down from the Fleet Street



presses to the south west, Exeter *Mirror* readers had to make do with the work-in-progress front-page headline ‘TV Fury Over Rock Cult Filth’. Nowhere near as catchy as the strapline that ‘them there Londoners’ got to see a few hours later, but it still sounded exactly like the call to arms he had been waiting for. He formed his first bands XLR8 and Metro Youth while still at school, and his next band Sanction after leaving the local college. As the proud founder of Inkyhand Press, he co-edited and published *Catalyst* fanzine, contributed to many other zines, and printed a handful of titles for other fanzine editors. Many years later he began to write about the history of the anarchist strand of punk rock, publishing articles in *Socialist History*, *Freedom*, *Music and Politics*, *Punk & Post-Punk* and elsewhere; and contributing to the books *Against the Grain: The British Far Left from 1956, Not Just Bits of Paper*, *Aesthetic of Our Anger: Anarcho-Punk, Politics, Music – 1979-1984* and ‘*Some of Us Scream Some of Us Shout*’: *Myths, Folklore and Epic Tales of the Anarcho*. He continues to research a book on the politics, culture and practice of anarchist punk, and is working on a number of other related projects. His regularly updated blog includes an archive of many of his published articles and presentations.

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#### **Ted Curtis**

Ted Curtis is an up and coming author, writing across all disciplines, but not advertising. He is currently finishing an instructional novel on possible escape paths for the unemployable at the end of the welfare state, *Here’s What Happened*, as well as a graphic novel on the aftermath of the puffin war. He was a punk before you were born, but he didn’t like it much. Random samples of new work can be found at <http://antsy-pantsy.blogspot.com/>. During the 1990s he had some success in the small press, but that wasn’t much fun either, so he concentrated on his drinking instead. He was very good at it too, but now he’s back.

#### **Mike Dines**

Originally from a working-class, market-trading background, Mike joined the West Sussex Institute of Higher Education in the early 1990s, gaining a first class in Music and Related Arts. Although a performer throughout his degree (he is a classical pianist by trade), he decided the road of musicology and analysis was for him; and so embarked on a Masters degree at the University of Sussex. After writing a thesis on Crass and anarcho-punk, Mike continued his research at the University of Salford, completing a PhD entitled *The Emergence of the Anarcho-Punk Scene of the 1980s*. Mike continues to write about punk and has recently co-edited the volume *Tales From the Punkside* (2014) and *Some of Us Scream... Some of Us Shout* (2016) with Greg Bull, and has also written on punk pedagogy and Krishnacore. His co-edited *The Aesthetics of Our Anger: Anarcho-Punk, Politics, Music* (2016) is published by Minor Compositions, an imprint of Autonomedia. His forthcoming publications include *And All Around Was Darkness* (2017) and *Punk Pedagogies in Practice* (2017).

#### **Gerard Evans**

Gerard Evans was the singer in Flowers in the Dustbin and indeed remains so since they reformed in 2014. During this period he also helped organise the first Stop The City demo in 1983. After Flowers, Gerard went on to write for *Sounds* and Amnesty International, using the pseudonym George Berger. Using this name, he wrote biographies of the Levellers (Virgin publishing) and Crass (Omnibus), before releasing the *All The Young Punks* series of books, where people who weren’t in bands got to tell their story for the first time. There is an anthology of his punk writings published called *Let’s Submerge*, which features his popular columns for 3ammagazine.com and a sample chapter of ‘Horse-Drawn And Quartered’ – his unpublished book about life on a horse-drawn wagon in Ireland. New books are in the pipeline. Since 1999, Gerard has been running a Web Consultancy called Abisti (named after his punk fanzine Ability Stinks – not suitable in full of course!) and he also makes guided meditation tapes to help people cope with the everyday stresses of modern life. He lives in Lewes, East Sussex. Still seeking.

Web Consultants: [abisti.co.uk](http://abisti.co.uk)  
 Guided Meditations: [abisti.com](http://abisti.com)  
 Punk: [flowersinthedustbin.co.uk](http://flowersinthedustbin.co.uk)

#### **Kathy Freeman**

Kathy Freeman was born in London and spent her childhood and teenage years in Southern England, moving to Liverpool in the 70s to attend art college there. Realising well before the end of the course that music was calling louder than painting, she spent a lot of time learning how to fingerpick and play slide on country blues songs. Following college she probably would have drifted into a fairly gentle hippie existence – featuring a lot of blues jams – for the rest of her life. But punk came along in 1977 and blew a hole right through that particular future, the blues jams being swiftly replaced by the louder, faster and wilder sounds of The Accelerators. Since the 70s she relocated to London, then Berlin, and been involved in a range of music projects such as The Birdhouse, Joyryde, Death Valley Surfers and Kathy X.

#### **Andy Hardcore**

Punk since 1978, teenage runaway. Grew up in South Yorkshire, ended up in Sunderland in the North East of England. Followed Crass / Poison Girls around the UK, sleeping on floors, in train stations and bushes. Indebted to the Peace Centre squatters of Sheffield who taught him how to eat from bins and skips, kept him hidden from Police whilst being a missing person. Part of The Bunker Collective, also indebted to the Sunderland anarcho punks for giving him somewhere to live. Currently plays drums for the hardcore band Prolefeed, still promoting DIY gigs in the North East, photographing DIY gigs, underground events & festivals.



**Nick Hydra**

It was in the township of Eltham, in a large and partly inhabited farmhouse set against a hillside four miles from the village and a mile and a half from any other dwelling, that Nick Hydra was born at 5 A.M. on Sunday, the second of February, 1913. This date was recalled because it was Candlemas, which people in Eltham curiously observe under another name; and because the noises in the hills had sounded, and all the dogs of the countryside had barked persistently, throughout the night before. Less worthy of notice was the fact that the mother was one of the decadent Whateleys, a somewhat deformed, unattractive albino woman of thirty-five, living with an aged and half-insane father about whom the most frightful tales of wizardry had been whispered in his youth. Lavinia Whateley had no known husband, but according to the custom of the region made no attempt to disavow the child; concerning the other side of whose ancestry the country folk might – and did – speculate as widely as they chose. On the contrary, she seemed strangely proud of the dark, goatish-looking infant who formed such a contrast to her own sickly and pink-eyed albinism, and was heard to mutter many curious prophecies about its unusual powers and tremendous future.

**Chris Low**

Chris Low first became attracted to punk in 1978 at the age of nine. A year later he started going to gigs and at the age of 10 soon embraced the emerging band and zine scene that would later come to be known as ‘anarcho punk’ publishing three issues of the fanzine, *Guilty of What?* and taking up drumming. Since the early 1980s he has played in bands including Political Asylum, The Apostles, Oi Polloi, The Parkinsons, Quango and, at present, the re-formed Part1. Following a career as a techno DJ and club runner in the late ‘80s-early ‘90s he continues to DJ throughout Japan, America & Europe, playing sets of dancefloor-friendly post-punk. He has written regularly for *Vice* magazine amongst other publications and has contributed to a number of books on the punk movement. In August 2016 an exhibition of his photography documenting five years of the Tokyo punk scene entitled “Up Yours! Tokyo Punk” was held at the Red Gallery in London followed by a showing at Moonstep in Tokyo. Further exhibitions are scheduled for Los Angeles in Jan 2017 and again in Tokyo this coming March. Chris is currently working on an anarcho-themed compilation album for the renowned Glasgow Optimo label and a revised and expanded edition of his photo-book, *Up Yours! Tokyo Punk & Japanarchy Today* (Red Gallery Publishing).

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**Viggo Mastad**

Viggo Mastad (born 1963) was guitarist, singer and songwriter for Norwegian bands Angor Wat and Israelvis through most of the 80s and 90s. His current band, Castro, is due to release a second album in 2017. Viggo has also been a writer/columnist for various magazines over the years, and is currently involved in Trondheim’s street magazine *Sorgenfri*. Faced with the fact that he was to become a father, Viggo opted for a ‘real job with meaning’ and started a career in nursing in the late 80s. He has since specialised in intensive care, and authored textbook chapters

on neuro-intensive care and neurosurgical nursing. Viggo currently works in nursing education at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU).

**Andy Owen**

Born in Bristol in June 1969. Lived with my Mum, Step Dad and Brother. Brought up in Bedminster Down and schooled at Chedar Grove Primary School. Moved to Chippenham in 1979. Went to Redland Primary School for the last year. Memories of Adi Smart blasting the Sex Pistols out of his bedroom window across the road from the school. Moved on to Hardenhuish comprehensive in 1980. Flunked and left in 85. Started off school there as a Rude Boy left as a Punk. From 85 spent a good few years gigging and moving about a bit. Few squats here and there, London, Redditch, Brum. Lived in Bristol (again), WSM, Chippenham (again). Spent most of my time in Chippenham really. Love my music (lots of types) and still love gigging. It’s a bit of a passion. Have two great boys and an extended family with my girlfriend Sally. After a lot of mental issues I’ve found happiness. True happiness. Life’s good at the moment. Happy days.

**Anth Palmer**

Anth Palmer spent much of his formative teenage punk years holed up in his bedroom listening to early Discharge, soaping stamps on SAEs and sellotaping coins to bits of cardboard in order for both to be mailed off in return for a copy of someone’s DIY punk zine. All of which would have been around the year 1984. In 2001, whilst on a three month ‘working holiday’ in Los Angeles and with all of his worldly possessions in storage in his sister’s attic, that eighteen years worth of zine collecting was drastically lost, as the entire lot was taken to the local council recycling centre by mistake by said sister who was having a bit of a clear out and who figured the boxes “just contained a load of old junk.” The loss was insurmountable to say the least. Anth Palmer published Dingo Baby zine between 1988 and 1992, *Duhhh* zine between 1993 and 1999 and more recently a publication titled *Go Fuck Yourself* – the sole objective and focus being to publish the writings on his travelling over the last twenty years.

Issue 4 of *Go Fuck Yourself* is available now.

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**Trev Paviour**

Born on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1966, Trev grew up on punk rock. A friend’s dad bought *Rattus Norvegicus* and *Damned Damned Damned* when they were released – Trev was about eleven years old at the time, and thought the albums were brilliant. He has lived in Farnham, Aldershot, Farnborough and Portsmouth, and has two grown up daughters who live in Aldershot. Trev was gutted when Sid and Malcolm Owen died, especially Malcolm who he thought was probably the best punk singer ever.

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**Lucy Robinson**

Lucy Robinson is Professor of Collaborative History at the University of Sussex. She writes on popular music, politics and identity, feminism and punk pedagogy. As well as co-ordinating the Subcultures Network, and the open access digital project Observing the 80s, she has recently advised on an exhibition on Jersey in the 1980s and on a new documentary project funded by the BFI, *Queerama*.

**Stephen Spencer-Fleet (Fleaty)**

Stephen Spencer-Fleet (Fleaty) lives and works in Bristol. He is a musician working under the title of Bludgeon Club Sound. He uses found sounds, samples and forgotten instruments. He has released three albums and two singles. He also manages the label Snake Pit Records. He is a writer, poet and purveyor of antique and vintage oddities.

**Francis Stewart**

Francis Stewart grew up in Northern Ireland discovering punk through the late, great John Peel, the not late but equally great Terri Hooley and the Warzone centre. Her interest in, and involvement with, punk has led to the completion of a PhD on Straight Edge punk as a surrogate for religion. She now works as a Teaching Fellow in the Religion department at the University of Stirling while contributing to numerous zines on and offline. *The Stranger in the Pit* is named after Sara Ahmed's postcolonial *Stranger Fetishization* theory and the chapter applies the theory to the way in which punk women are written about and remembered in punk memorials. These women are often represented or sometimes forced to experience punk in such a way as bolster white, working class, cisnormative, male agency and identity. They are fetishized as an example of how punk rejected or broke barriers such as race, class, and gender, yet they remain the strangers in the pit. This chapter also tries to take small steps to rectify this by focusing on the accounts of anarcho-punk women who experienced this stranger fetishization.

**Gail Thibert**

Gail Thibert joined her first band Adventures in Colour aged 18 as lead singer although she never wrote any of the songs. She then joined the Lost Cherrees five months later on keyboards and backing vocals: *"I can't play keyboards but I'm a good blagger!"* After two years in Lost Cherrees she left to concentrate on other creative pursuits such as sewing clothes and piercing ears. Many years later, she moved to Essex and gave birth to her only child, who was born deaf and with birth defects. She later joined the Pukes on Ukulele and vocals for a couple of years and then was asked to sing backing for Flowers in the Dustbin for just one song. *"Well after hearing me not murder that one song, they let me try a few more and now I am shoved to the front of the stage with lead singer and original member Gerard."* A couple of years ago, she asked Sarah Pink to play some guitar on a project, and somehow ended up in her band doing backing vocals. *"We still need to organise those guitar sessions."*

**Phil Tonge**

Phil 'Hedgehog' Tonge is a writer, cartoonist and troublemaker. Born and raised in the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire, rampant unemployment meant he had to get on his bike and move to Nottingham in the mid-1980s. His activities over the years include self-publishing the fanzine *Radical Hedgehog* and contributing the track *Radio Times* to the *Bullshit Detector Three* compilation album. You can peer into his slightly bizarre world on his Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/phil.tonge.737](https://www.facebook.com/phil.tonge.737)

**Neil Transpontine**

Neil Transpontine was born and grew up in Luton, and now lives in South London. As well as dabbling in music, his interests include running and radical history. He is responsible for the SE London blog *Transpontine* (<http://transpont.blogspot.co.uk>) and *History is Made at Night* (<http://history-is-made-at-night.blogspot.co.uk>), which covers the politics of musicking and dancing. He contributes regularly to the 'noise and politics' zine *Datacide* (<http://datacide-magazine.com/>).



